CIRCASSIAN PRINCE & PRINCESS.

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THE WORLD

IN MINIATURE;

EDITED BY

FREDERIC SHOBERL.

Russia,

BEING

A DESCRIPTION

OF THE

CHARACTER, MANNERS, CUSTOMS, DRESS, DIVERSIONS, AND OTHER PECULIARITIES OF THE DIFFERENT NATIONS,

INHABITING THE

Russian Empire.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

ILLUSTRATED WITH

Seventy-Two Coloured Engravings.

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RUSSIA

In Miniature.

PART III.

TARTAR NATIONS.

CHAP. I.

OF THE TARTARS IN GENERAL.

NEXT to the Slavonian nations, the Tartars, descendants of the ancient Scythians, are the most numerous race in the Russian empire. We shall not stop to enquire the origin of the word *Tartar;* it is of little consequence to us whether the Tartars received their name from the Chinese or from some other

nation. It is possible that the term was formerly applied indiscriminately to all the inhabitants of central Asia; and as these different tribes resembled one another in their manners, way of life, religion and language, no actual confusion resulted from this use of the appellation.

In the history of Russia the Tartars have acted an important part. The Great Horde, or as it is called by the Russian historians, the Golden Horde, subdued that country. The work so successfully commenced by Tchengis Khan in the thirteenth century, the famous Tamerlane completed towards the conclusion of the fourteenth. Under that conqueror the Tartar mo-

narchy embraced a great portion of Asia. This most brilliant epoch in the history of the Tartars was not of long continuance. In the sixteenth century their monarchy was parcelled out, their glory was eclipsed, and they ceased to form one great nation; they were split into various hordes, which either were independent, or became subject to Russia, Turkey, Persia and China.

The Tartars of the Russian empire, to whom our attention must be confined, inhabit the governments of Casan, Orenburg and Tobolsk, the north coasts of the Caspian and Black Seas, the northern part of Mount Caucasus, and lastly the immense steppes or deserts situated between the rivers Ural and

Yenisei. They have a particular constitution, which secures to them the privilege of choosing chiefs to govern them from among their nobility. They formerly paid to the Russian government the tribute imposed by their ancient Khans, but they are now taxed the same as Russian peasants.

Simplicity, frugality and economy are predominant virtues among these originally pastoral and roving people. An erratic life is what they prefer; but they begin to be habituated to towns and to sedentary occupations. The ancient Tartars were always on horseback, and their nobility followed no other profession than that of arms. This fondness for a military life is but

repressed by circumstances, not extinguished. They are as ferocious in war, as they are gentle and kind at home. An enemy is treated by the Tartars with the utmost inhumanity, but the stranger who seeks an asylum beneath their roof is cherished as a member of the family, and they frequently kill a mare for an entertainment on occasion of his coming.

Their disposition is grave, serious and phlegmatic. Like all the nations of the East, they consider rest as their chief happiness, and spend whole hours together sitting cross-legged and doing nothing but smoking their pipes. Their women, secluded from society, cannot charm their leisure. There is

but little variety in their amusements, which have nothing interesting for a European. The remembrance of the ancient greatness of their nation fills them with pride, but that sentiment does not excite them to imitate their ancestors. Though they boast of the monuments erected by the Tartars of old, it never enters their minds that they might attain equal excellence in the arts, and mercantile speculations alone engage their attention.

The Turukish or Turkish language is common among all the Tartars. Such of them as are Mahometans not only speak, but also write it with Arabic letters. They employ the Arabic language in their prayers and in all religious

exercises, though it is understood by very few even of their priests themselves. They are less fanatic than the Turks; and their attachment to the doctrine of fatalism produces in them a patient resignation under misfortunes, and an apathy which frequently prevents them from shunning calamities. They have a mufti or supreme head of their religion—a dignity created for them by the empress Catherine. This mufti resides in the government of the Caucasus; he has under him three *agouns* or elders, residing at Casan, Tobolsk and Astracan, and all the *mollas*, or priests.

The pagan Tartars are rude and ignorant; they have neither schools nor

writing, hence their language is become so corrupt, that the Mahometan Tartars can scarcely understand them.

The Tartar has frequently been confounded with the Mongol. This is a great mistake. The Mongol is ugly and deformed, whereas the Tartar is well-shaped, has handsome features and a European face, but a sallow complexion.

CHAP. II.

TARTARS OF CASAN AND ORENBURG.

Casan was formerly the capital of a Tartar kingdom, and was founded about the middle of the thirteenth century by Sayn, son of Batu Khan, and King of the great horde. His successors were frequently at war with Russia, and sometimes implored her assistance against the other Tartars. In 1470 the Casan Tartars acknowledged themselves vassals of Muscovy; but they afterwards revolted and several times massacred the Russians. The Czar Iwan Wasiljewitsch II. at length resolved to

employ all his forces against them, and in 1552 laid siege to Casan. The Tartars, notwithstanding the want of provisions, defended themselves with the greatest courage, and when the Russians had forced their way into the town, the inhabitants disputed every street and every inch of ground. After a dreadful slaughter, the Russians made themselves masters of the capital, and added the kingdom of Casan to their growing empire. Many of the Tartars fled, for fear of being persecuted in case of submission by a christian nation; but when they saw that such of their countrymen as remained were not molested in their religious worship, a great number of the Maho-

metan fugitives returned, together with Nogay Tartars and Kirghises, to Casan and its vicinity. From these Tartars, and others who joined them in the sequel, are descended the inhabitants of two suburbs of Casan and the neighbouring villages. Their manners and customs exactly resemble those of the Tartars of Orenburg; so that the following particulars apply to the one as well as the other.

These people are in general of the middle stature and slender: they have a long face, small mouth and eyes, the latter animated, a thin nose, a ruddy complexion and straight brown hair, which turns grey early; and their brisk gait, erect carriage and somewhat shy

air give them something that is rather prepossessing. They shave the head, leaving only a small tuft of hair on the crown. They wear a short beard and mustaches, cover the head with a cap of interwoven horse-hair, sometimes embroidered with gold, over which they put in summer very large hats, usually of a white colour, and in winter a low cap bordered with fur.

The dress of the Casan Tartars consists of a linen shirt, wide trowsers, buskins or stockings of skin, and a robe of silk for the rich, and nankeen for the poor. The latter also wear shoes made of the bark of the lime-tree. The upper garment is an oriental robe, wide and long, made of fine or common cloth,

TARTAR of CASAN.

[illegible]

with sleeves which are narrow below and frequently slashed above. It is fastened by a leather belt, from which are suspended a sabre, a knife and a pipe. See the engraving at the commencement of this chapter.

The costume of the women, one of whom is represented in the opposite plate, resembles that of the men and likewise consists of trowsers, boots and an upper and under robe. The poor wear nankeen, but the upper robe of the rich is frequently of silk or brocade: the boots are of morocco leather and extremely peaked. The corset, embroidered about the breast, is fastened by a frog or button. On the bosom they wear strings of beads or pieces of money laid one

over another like the scales of fish, with which they often make a scarf, that goes from the left shoulder to the right. Their fingers are encircled with rings and jewels. The rich have the forehead covered with a net-work of pearls, instead of which the poor use glass beads. The married women wear a very high pointed cap, entirely covered with coloured jewels, from which a piece of brocaded silk hangs down to the bottom of the back. The Tartar women rarely appear before strangers without a veil. The married females, as among all other Asiatic nations, are better dressed than the single, because the finery of the former is creditable to their husbands, but that of the latter

TARTAR FEMALE of CASAN.

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Vol. ii.

WOMAN OF AZAMAR.

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would be lost when they are disposed of in marriage.

The annexed engraving represents the costume of the women of Arzama, in the kingdom of Casan, which is chiefly remarkable on account of the singular form of the head-dress.

The Tartar woman are rather healthy-looking than handsome. From their infancy they are trained to habits of industry, modesty and subjection. The men are hospitable, sober, polite and faithful to their promises: they not only instil into their children a spirit of industry and frugality, but have them instructed in reading, writing, the Arabic language, history and religion.

The smallest village has its chapel and its school, and in the larger places there are schools for girls as well as boys. Many Tartar peasants, and more frequently merchants, possess small collections of manuscript histories, and are intimately acquainted with the history and antiquities of their own and the neighbouring states.

The Tartars are strict followers of the law of Mahomet in regard to abstinence from spirituous liquors, drinking nothing but water, mead, or tea, which is their favourite beverage, and which they make by boiling tea in caldrons with water, milk, butter and salt. Their food consists chiefly of farinace-

ous aliments, such as bread baked in ashes, and different kinds of gruel, but they are also fond of horse-flesh. Both sexes smoak tobacco from childhood.

The houses of the Casan Tartars are almost all of wood, and built after the same model: they contain no other furniture than a few coffers and broad benches, which serve both for tables and chairs, and also for beds, when mattresses or carpets have been spread upon them. The rich sometimes have Turkish sophas with canopies. The huts of the poor have but one large room, in which are the fire-place and a caldron set in brick-work. Instead of glass windows, they have small aper-

tures closed with fish-skin or oiled paper.

Many of the Tartars at Casan are employed in the manufacture of morocco-leather and of a sort of soap which is highly esteemed. They evince talents for all handicraft-businesses, and also for commerce: which is mostly carried on by barter. Some undertake long journeys in prosecution of their mercantile speculations, and are absent two or three years: others cultivate the ground and keep a great quantity of bees.

Though the Koran allows the Tartars to have four wives, yet those of Casan are mostly content with one: when however, the first, from age, or any

other cause, ceases to please, they will take a second: and such merchants as travel much and have houses in distant places keep a wife at each.

Wives are purchased at the rate of from twenty to five hundred rubles, according to their beauty. When the father and the suitor have agreed respecting the price, the latter is allowed to visit the bride. After he has paid the stipulated price by instalments, the marriage takes place in the presence of the mollah, who asks the young couple if they will wed one another; on which he repeats a prayer and bestows the nuptial benediction. The evening before the day appointed for the wedding

the female friends of the young woman assemble at her house and deplore with her the approaching change in her condition; while two men to console her, sing songs which treat of the happiness of that change. She is then carried, seated on a carpet, to the house of the bridegroom, where she meets the females of his family. The festivities on the occasion last several days.

Their cemeteries are always out of the villages and uninclosed. The corpse, which is attended by men only, is carried to the grave in a coffin, but interred without one. The grave, about five feet deep, has a cavity formed on one side, in which the body is placed, in

such a manner as not to be touched by the earth when it is thrown in: because they believe that two angels speedily arrive to conduct the deceased to judgment.

The amusements of the Casan Tartars consist in dancing, singing and music. The sexes have separate dances: those of the men are lively and martial. The women move about rather than dance, and hold their hands before their faces. Their songs are all in the oriental style, that is, replete with metaphors and bold imagery: they are not in rhyme, but highly poetical, and the airs are of a martial cast. Their musical instruments are the same

as those of the Russians, with the exception of the *kobas,* a sort of violin with two strings, producing a discordant and disagreeable sound.

Horses constitute the chief wealth of the Tartar nations. There is nothing that they prize so highly as a swift runner, and no price that the rich will not give for such a steed. One of their favourite diversions is horse-racing. The principal races are held annually at the spring-equinox, when the Tartar year commences. The horses are kept a long time in training for this competition; and we are assured that, whether we consider the ardour of the riders, the jealousy which seems to animate the

horses, or the interest manifested by the spectators, these Casan Tartar races are not surpassed by the most famous matches ever witnessed at Newmarket.

CHAP. III.

THE TARTARS OF KATSCHA.

The Tartars of Katscha, or Katschinzes, have been established from time immemorial in the government of Tomsk, on the left bank of the Yenisei, between the Abacan and the Katscha, and on the intermediate streams. This country is mountainous but fertile, and affords pasturage at all seasons to their herds and flocks of horses, horned cattle, and sheep. Like all the roving nations they neglect agriculture: but some of them cultivate barley and buckwheat, of which they make gruel, which is their

favourite dish, and to which they resort whenever they are hungry, for they have no stated meals. They are by no means delicate in their food; no species of quadruped, bird, fish, wild root or fruit, comes amiss to them. Having turned the milk of their mares and cows sour, they extract from it a strong liquor, of which they drink to excess. The apparatus employed for this purpose is extremely simple. They set a large pot full of sour milk on the fire, cover it with a wooden lid, lute all the apertures with clay, and adapt to it a tube communicating with another vessel. When they entertain their friends, the distillation takes place in their presence; they then drink the liquor quite hot, and

with the residue make a kind of soup, or cheese, by the addition of milk.

The Katschinzes have the same costume as the other Tartars. Their garments are made of skin or coarse cloth manufactured by their wives. Finer stuffs they are obliged to buy. Their shirts are of linen made from nettles, but most of them go without. Some shave the head, leaving only a lock behind. In summer they wear low felt hats and in winter cover the head with a fur cap or hood.

The women wear drawers, boots or embroidered buskins, an under-garment of silk or cotton and an upper garment which folds over before and the shape of which is elegant and pleasing. On

TARTAR GIRL OF KATSCHIN.

Pub.d Jan.y 1 18[illegible] by R. Ackermann, London.

extraordinary occasions they wear robes covered with embroidery, and bordered with fur or stuff of various colours. To their ear-rings they hang strings of beads and other trinkets. The hair is plaited into two thick tresses, which fall over the bosom: but unmarried females have a greater number, in general nine, which they adorn with ribbons. The rich fasten only the under garment with a girdle, that this garment and their embroidered buskins may be seen. The annexed plate shows the difference between the costume of matrons and that of virgins among the Katschinzes.

These people have no fixed habitations: they dwell in light *yurts* made

of felt or birch-bark, stretched over poles united at top by hoops. All their culinary utensils consist of an iron pot, and a few troughs and bowls of birch wood, which are never washed. The Katschinzes are the filthiest of all the Tartars: they are said also to be indolent, quarrelsome and ferocious, when intoxicated.

They purchase their wives, and like the other Tartars employ a negociator to make the bargain. This agent, after explaining his errand to the girl's father, presents him with some brandy and a pipe of tobacco, and instantly retires, without waiting for his answer. Some time afterwards he returns, and if the brandy and the pipe have not

been touched in the interim, it is a sign of refusal: if, on the other hand, the one has been drunk and the other smoked, this denotes that the proposal is accepted. Six months afterwards the lover appears in person and repeats this ceremony. The portion is then stipulated and a day fixed for the wedding, which is also frequently deferred for several months. Whatever may be the length of this interval, the suitor must not avail himself of it to make love to his bride: a girl would be dishonoured if she were to give him during this period the least token of affection.

The price of a wife is from five to fifty or even a hundred head of cattle.

When a lover is too poor to purchase the object of his choice, he agrees to serve the father of the girl for a term of from three to five years, and is employed in tending his cattle, hunting, carrying wood and such-like occupations. Should a more fortunate rival meanwhile present himself and obtain a preference, he carries off the girl, and the first suitor can only demand a compensation for his services. In case of the death of a bride, the sum paid for her is placed to account in the bargain for her sister; if she have left no sister, it is lost. Should the bridegroom die, his father augments his harem with the bride.

The marriage is celebrated in a new

yurt built for the lover on this occasion. His father must not see his daughter-in-law after the wedding-day: and should she chance to meet him, she must fall down on the ground and conceal her face till he has passed; but the mother-in-law and the parents of the bride may see her as often as they please. A husband who is dissatisfied with his wife sends her home without ceremony, even many years after her marriage; in this case he loses the price paid for her, but the children remain the property of the father.

CHAP. XI.

TARTARS OF THE CRIMEA.

These Tartars inhabit the peninsula which was conquered by their ancestors, under one of the sons of Tchengis Khan, in 1213. They were long no better than a horde of banditti, desolating the neighbouring provinces, and levying tribute from the Russians. In the sequel they became themselves tributary to the Turks, and had their own khans till 1783, when the Crimea was added by conquest to the Russian empire. It now forms the government of Taurida.

MURZA, or GENTLEMAN.

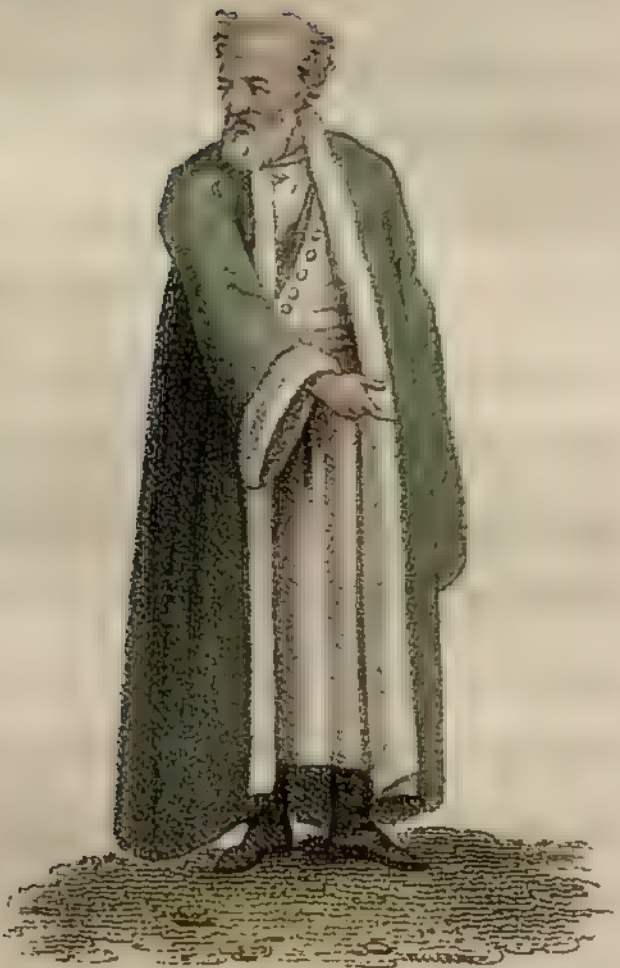
Pubd. by R. Ackermann London [illegible]

The Tartars of this country nearly resemble the other Tartars treated of in the preceding pages. Their physiognomy is Turkish. The young wear mustaches and dress much like the Circassians: the elderly men let the beard grow, but shave the head, on which they wear a large cap. Their nobles, or gentlemen, whose number is about two hundred and fifty, are called *moorza*: one of these is exhibited in the annexed plate.

The magistrates or judges of the Crimea, are not natives of the country, but are commonly selected from among the students of the Russian universities; and after receiving a suitable education there, they are sent to the

remote provinces, that justice may be uniformly administered in all parts of the empire. One of these magistrates is represented in the annexed plate.

The dress of the *moorza*, or nobles is altogether Circassian, excepting that the cap is larger than that worn by the princes of Mount Caucasus. Their figure on horseback is in the highest degree stately, and among all the Crimean Tartars, of what rank soever, an elegance of manners may be remarked. Their dress displays as much taste as can be shewn by a habit necessarily decorated with silver and gold lace. They delight sometimes in strong contrast, by opposing silver lace to black velvet for their caps, and scarlet or



JUDGE of the CRIMEA.

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rose-coloured silk to dark cloth for their vest or pelisse; but in general the dress of a Tartar of distinction is remarkable for its simple elegance as well as cleanliness. Their favourite colour in cloth is drab; and the gray or white wool for their winter caps is of all other ornaments most in esteem.

The Tartars, young and old, shave their heads and wear in their houses a sort of scull-cap, over which in winter is placed a larger and loftier helmet of wool, or during summer, a turban. Their legs in winter are swathed in cloth bandages, like those worn throughout Russia, and their feet covered by bark-sandals. In summer, both legs

and feet are naked. Their shirts, like those in Turkey, are wide and loose at the sleeves, hanging down below the ends of the fingers; if they have occasion to use their hands, either to eat or to work, they cast back the sleeve upon the shoulder, and leave the arm bare. The jacket or waistcoat is generally of silk and cotton; and the trowsers, being made very large, full and loose, though bound tight below the knee, fall over in thick folds upon the calf of the leg. In the waistcoat is a small pocket just below the breast, in which the steel and flint are kept for lighting their pipes. Sometimes in summer they cover their feet with

TARTAR WOMAN.

Pub. by R. Ackermann London

morocco slippers, but these are always taken off when they enter their apartments.

The Tartar women of the Crimea (one of whom is delineated in the plate) are small, and have pleasing features: they stain their nails red and their hair and eye-brows black. They very rarely appear abroad, and never without veils, sometimes covering all the face excepting the eyes, and at others the whole head: and as if these veils were not a sufficient screen, no sooner do they perceive a man, than they hang their heads and often endeavour to get out of sight by running away. On this subject Clarke relates a pleasant anecdote:—

An English servant, brought to the Crimea by the Russian admiral Mordvinoff, observing this aversion in the Tartar women from being seen, deemed it an act of rudeness to give them the trouble of hiding their faces and of running away on his account: therefore, whenever he encountered any of them, he used to cover his face, and take to his heels to conceal himself in the first place that presented. This passed unnoticed for some time; but at length the Tartar women, struck with the singularity of seeing a man always avoid them and endeavour to conceal himself from their observation, let fall a portion of their veils when they next met him, which

only caused him to run faster than before. This excited their curiosity to such a degree, that at last they fairly hunted him; and following him in parties to his hiding-place with their veils off, were resolved to see the man who first concealed his face at the approach of a woman; and actually demanded an explanation of his extraordinary conduct.

Of the domestic habits of the people in general, the traveller from whom the preceding observations are borrowed, speaks as follows :—

When a stranger arrives, they conduct him into the apartments destined for the men, and present him with a bason, water and a clean napkin to

wash his hands. They then place before him whatever their dwelling affords of curd, cream, honey in the comb, poached eggs, roasted fowls, or fruit. After the meal is over, the bason and water are brought in as before; because the Tartars, like the Turks and other oriental nations, eat with their fingers and use no forks. Then, if in the house of a rich Tartar, a long pipe is presented, with a tube of cherry-tree wood, tipped with amber or ivory. After this carpets and cushions are laid for the guests that they may repose.

All the houses of the Tartars, even the cottages of the poor, are extremely clean, being often white-washed.

The floor is generally of earth, but smooth, firm, dry and covered with mats and carpets. The meanest Tartar possesses a double dwelling; one for himself and his guests, and the other for his women. They do not allow their most intimate friends to enter the place allotted for the female part of the family.

With so much cleanliness it is rather surprising to find the itch a very prevalent disorder, especially among the poor. It is also difficult to escape the attacks of venomous insects and vermin, and among the rest the tarantula and the scorpion.

They have no chairs in their houses: a single stool may be observed, about

three inches high, for the purpose of supporting a tray during meals. This stool is often ornamented by carved work or inlaid mother-of-pearl. The use of a carpet and matting for the floor is universal: sometimes as a substitute, they employ thick cloths of their own manufacture from goats' hair, and these are exported to Constantinople.

During the summer months the men make very little use of that part of the dwelling which is peculiarly appropriated to them. Their chief delight consists in the open air; sleeping at night either under the shed before the door, or in the shade of the fine spreading trees near their houses. In the

principal chamber of a Tartar dwelling, there is a platform raised about twelve inches from the floor, occupying one entire side of the apartment, and used not for a seat but as a place for their household chests, and heaps of carpets, mats, cushions and clothes.

In their diet they make great use of honey, and their mode of keeping and taking bees accords with the usual simplicity of their lives. From the trunks of young trees about six inches in diameter they form cylinders by scooping out almost all except the bark, and then, closing their extremities with plaster or mud, they place them horizontally piled one upon another in the gardens for hives. When they open these cy-

linders to obtain fresh honey, they detach the bees merely by holding them over a piece of burning paper, without any aid of sulphur. The honey of the Crimea is of very superior quality; the bees, as in Greece, feeding on the blossoms of the wild thyme of the mountains and such flowers as the country spontaneously affords.

Every Tartar cottage has its garden, in the cultivation of which the owner finds his principal amusement. Vegetation is so rapid, that in two years vines not only shoot up so as to form a shade before the doors, but are actually laden with fruit. They delight to have their houses as it were buried in foliage. These, consisting of only one story,

with low, flat roofs, beneath trees which spread immense branches quite over them, constitute villages, which at a distance are known only by the tufted groves in which they lie concealed.

The Tartars of the Crimea sow only as much corn as may be necessary for their own consumption. Like the Turks they deem it the greatest happiness to sit still, to smoke or to sleep; and they are generally found stretched on thick mats spread on the flat roofs of their cottages, in the shade of their favourite trees, either asleep, or inhaling the fumes of tobacco.

The harvest, however, rouses some of them into a state of activity. The corn

is carried in upon horses, and as soon as it is collected, they pursue the following method of separating the grain from the ear. After selecting an even spot of ground, they drive a pole or stake into the earth, placing the corn in a circle round it, so as to form a circumference about eight or nine yards in diameter. They then fasten a horse by a long cord to the pole, aud continue driving him round and round upon the corn, until the cord is wound up on the pole; and afterwards turning his head in the opposite direction, he is again set going till the cord is untwisted. By this process they do not fail to obtain the whole of the corn clean from the sheaf:

TARTAR of the MOUNTAINS.

the chaff is afterwards collected and carefully housed for fodder, but the straw is destroyed.

The Tartars of the Mountains are considered by travellers as a totally distinct race from the other inhabitants of the Crimea. In their persons they resemble the Turks, as may be seen on reference to the opposite plate. They are a fair and handsome people, like the Tartars in the north of Russia, addicted to agriculture and commerce. The mountaineers are clumsy horsemen, in which particular they resemble the northern Tartars. In disposition they are gentle and hospitable. When old, they have large bushy beards, whereas the Tartars of the plain seldom have

more than a few thin hairs. See the annexed engraving.

The earth called by the German mineralogists *meerschaum*, and by the Tartars *keff-kil*, foam-earth, is a product of the Crimea. It is found merely by digging a hole in the ground, and is generally covered by a stratum of marl from eight to twelve fathoms thick. The layer of *keff-kil* seldom exceeds twenty-eight inches in thickness and beneath it the marl occurs as before. Before the reduction of the Crimea by Russia, this earth was a considerable article of commerce with Constantinople, where it was used in the public baths by the women to cleanse the hair. At present the annual exportation from

TARTAR of the MOUNTAINS.

[illegible]

the peninsula does not exceed two tons. It is chiefly sold to German merchants for the manufacture of those beautiful tobacco-pipes which are called by the French *ecume de mer*, and which, after they have been coloured by long use, sell at enormous prices. The long process necessary to the perfection of one of those pipes is a curious subject.

The first rude shape is given to the pipes on the spot where the mineral is dug. Here they are pressed in a mould and laid in the sun to harden; then baked in an oven, boiled in milk and rubbed with soft leather. In this state they go to Constantinople; for, since the interruption of commerce between the Crimea and Turkey, the substance

requisite in their manufacture has been chiefly dug near the site of the ancient Iconium in Anatolia. At Constantinople there is a peculiar bazar for the sale of these pipes, which are then bought up by the merchants and sent by caravans to Pesth in Hungary. Still the form of the pipes is large and coarse, but at Pesth begins the manufacture which is to fit them for the German markets. They are there soaked twenty-four hours in water and then turned on a lathe. In this process many of them prove porous and are good for nothing: sometimes only two or three out of ten succeed. From Pesth they are conveyed to Vienna, and ultimately to the fairs of Leipsic, Frankfurt, Manheim,

and other towns upon the Rhine, where the best sell for from three to five and even seven pounds sterling each. When the oil of tobacco has given them, after long smoking, a fine porcelain yellow, or, what is still more prized, a dark tortoise-shell hue, they have been known to sell for forty or fifty pounds of our money.

CHAP. V.

NOGAY TARTARS.

The Nogay Tartars inhabit the *steppes* situated to the north of the Caucasus and of the Black Sea, as far as the Danube and the northern part of the Kuban. They are divided into several hordes, some of which have fixed abodes, while others are rovers. The Nogays subject to Russia dwell partly in Eastern Nogay, partly in the Kuban, where they are dispersed on the banks of the Wolga, and in some other provinces of the empire. Colonies of these people are also settled in different governments,

among others that of Astracan. If collected into one mass, these despersed hordes and colonies would form a numerous population. We have no authentic historical accounts of these people. According to the Greek and Arabian authors, they derived their name from a chief, called Nogai, who, at the head of a strong Mongol army, conquered, about the conclusion of the thirteenth century, the country situated between the Black Sea and the district which lies between the Danube and the Don; whence the Nogays probably extended themselves to the Wolga, the Ural, and thence to the Irtish.

Other Tartar tribes have, by their intermixture with foreign nations, lost

their civil institutions, their religion, their manners, and their original features, so completely, that, without the aid of history, it would be difficult to discover their origin. This is not the case with the Nogays: having never mingled with other nations, they have retained their national character, both moral and physical. They are genuine Tartars, in whom we still find the distinctive traits of that nation.

The Nogay Tartar is of a spare form and middling stature: his face is oval, with a fresh complexion and a lively look; the mouth small; the eyes likewise small, but black and very expressive; he has dark brown hair, regular white teeth, and large ears. Few of the

women are handsome, but they have an open, pleasing countenance. The freshness of their complexion indicates health, and the accurate proportion of their figures gives them many charms. The Nogays are in general of a robust constitution; their sobriety and cleanliness preserve them from many diseases, thanks to the Koran, which enjoins frequent ablution and abstinence from wine and spirituous liquors. Though polygamy is lawful among them, yet it rarely happens that people of the lower class have more than one wife. The rich usually have two, but never more.

The roving Nogays have no other habitations than moveable huts, of a

circular form, constructed of poles inclining towards one another at the top, but not meeting, so as to leave an aperture for the admission of light and the escape of smoke. Above this aperture, they hoist a piece of stuff of different colours, somewhat resembling a flag. The hut is covered with felt, fastened in such a manner that it cannot be taken away without destroying the whole edifice. To remove these huts, they place them, without taking them in pieces, upon a two-wheeled carriage, drawn by oxen. When they intend to remain but a short time on a spot, the hut is left upon the carriage, and the owner eats, rests, and sleeps, either in or under it. These habitations, as may naturally be

supposed, are not very large. As the rich have several of them, the Tartar markets resemble moveable villages. Their furniture is very inconsiderable: a few pots and kettles, earthen vessels calebashes, some mats and pieces of felt, with a hatchet, compose nearly all the articles they want for housekeeping.

All their wealth consists in cattle, horses, oxen, and sheep. A *moorza*, or Nogay noble, is considered opulent if he possesses a thousand horses, five hundred oxen or cows, two thousand sheep, two hundred goats, and twenty camels. Upon the latter, they remove their wives and baggage. It it rare for any of the common people to possess a

thousand head of cattle of all kinds. Such of the Nogays as have no herds or flocks, earn their subsistence by practising various trades.

Their diet is simple and frugal: they eat horse-flesh, cheese, gruel, and various dishes prepared with flour. Bread is not in general use among them and they drink the milk of their mares.

The common people of both sexes dress like other Tartar peasants. They shave the head; some also cut their beards, with the exception of the mustaches. Their clothes are made of coarse linen, gray woollen cloth of their own manufacture, or sheep-skin.

The princes and *moorza*, wear small round caps, adorned with lace, and turn-

ed up with fur. Their upper garment is made in the Circassian fashion, with open sleeves, and pockets at the breast, to hold their implements for striking a light. They wear loose trowsers and red morocco shoes. All of them when they travel, carry with them a cloak of felt or thick cloth, which protects them from rain and wind, and also serves for a bed when night overtakes them by the way. Under their cap, they wear a cloth hood, to cover the head the more effectually.

The dress of the females is the same as that of other Tartar women. The princesses are distinguished by the richness of their apparel; their caps exactly resemble those of the men.

All the women plait their hair, and the unmarried females lengthen out these tresses by means of ribbons, which hang down to the calf of the leg. Their girdles are decorated with various ornaments of gold, silver, and copper. When they go abroad, they cover their faces with a veil. Some of the Nogay women, as for instance those of the *Kundurow* horde, one of whom is represented in the annexed plate, not only have rings upon their fingers, but, like the Hindoo females, introduce into the cartilage of the nose a gold ring enriched with precious stones, and so large as to touch the lower lip.

The Nogays profess Mahometanism, but are very negligent in the practice

CONDOUR TARTAR WOMAN.

Pub.d by R. Ackermann London 1822.

of its ceremonies, with which they mingle many superstitious customs of the Mongols. Hence Selym Guerai Khan's buffoon, when his master wished to persuade him to turn Mussulman, replied: "As to the Mussulman religion, I cannot embrace it, but to please you I will turn Nogay."

In 1788, the depredations of the Nogay hordes obliged the Russian government to send troops against them to disperse them. They were accordingly put to the rout, and several hordes, seeking their safety in flight, were intercepted by the mountaineers. There are hordes, which are more addicted to plunder than others; those that follow agricultural occupations are peaceable.

Hospitality is a general virtue among the Nogays, as among all the Tartars.

The Astracan Tartars, residing in the city of that name and in the adjacent villages, are Nogays. Besides these there are many others who have permanent habitations and dwell in villages on the Terek, Kuban and Kuma: but their number is small compared with that of the Nogays who lead a roving life. The Tartars of Astracan occupy a considerable suburb where they have a bazar of stone containing many shops. They carry on a considerable traffic with the Armenians, Persians, Indians and Bucharians, and have flourishing manufactures of cottons, silks, camlets and morocco-leather. Their soap-ma-

kers employ the fat of the Caspian seals and soda. The women spin cotton of such fineness that one pound weight of yarn costs three or four rubles. The Tartars of the adjacent villages supply Astracan with culinary vegetables. The costume of the Astracan Tartar females nearly resembles that of the Armenian women.

The latter is described as the richest in Russia, insomuch that it is surprising they can sustain the weight of their dress. The first and inner robe is of silk and gold; the second of black velvet, heavily laden with gold and pearls. The third or outer vest is almost of massive gold in ponderous em-

broidery, with large gold knobs, and buttons, tassels and fringe of the same metal. The turban is white, hangs over the left shoulder, and conceals the face, excepting the nose and eyes. Two thick locks of hair, one on each side, are brought in front of the ears.

The Kundurow Tartars rove about on the Achtuba, a branch of the Wolga. They were formerly subject to the Calmucks, but in 1770, when many of the latter removed from the Russian steppes to those of Soongaria, the Kundurow Tartars recovered their liberty and repaired for safety to the islands of the Wolga below Krasnoyarsk. They are chiefly engaged in breeding

CONDOUR TARTAR GIRL.

Pub^d by R. Ackermann London 1821.

horned cattle, which they use both for riding and draught, on which account they keep but few horses.

The females of this horde wear a conical cap very much like the ecclesiastical tiara. The bosom is covered with a stomacher which buttons before and is covered with embroidery. See the opposite plate.

The Tartars on the sea of Azof, who also belong to the Nogays, are described by Clarke as a small race of men, who disfigure themselves by pressing their ears forward with the lower rim of their caps from their tenderest infancy; in consequence of which practice their ears protrude from the sides of their heads and front the spectator. Some of those

who passed the traveller at Nakhtshivan looked frightfully wild, appearing in the rude and perhaps primeval dress of the first shepherds of the earth. Their bodies were almost naked; over their shoulders were loosely suspended the undressed hides of their sheep, each being fastened by a single loop in front. Upon their heads and round their waists they wear a covering of the same materials, and bark sandals on their feet. Exactly such figures are represented on Greek vases and in the sculpture of ancient Greece.

CHAP. VI.

THE BASCHKIRS.

The Baschkirs inhabit the province of Ufa, in the government of the same name, and the province of Ekatherinenburg, in the government of Permia. It was no doubt these parts that Rubruquis and Plan Carpin designated by the appellation of Patcharia and Pascatir. Those two travellers were astonished at hearing in that country a language resembling the Hungarian. Hence it has been concluded, that the Baschkirs are of Finnish origin, and that the Hungarians are of the same race; but

the Baschkirs have in reality more resemblance to the Tartars than to the Fins. It may hence be inferred that a nation of Tartar extraction has succeeded the ancient inhabitants of Baschkiria; perhaps the Bulgarians, for Baschkiria formed a part of ancient Bulgaria. The Baschkirs themselves assert, that they are descended from the Nogay Tartars. The ugliness of the Baschkirs has been somewhat exaggerated: they have, it is true, small eyes, a flat nose, and long ears; yet there is not a Baschkir who resembles the hideous portrait that we find of them in Lavater's work. With the exception of bow legs and thighs, they are well proportioned and robust. Their character is none of

the best: they are hard-hearted, and suspicious. Their neighbours, the Kirghises, call them *istaki*, or the *dirty;* and it must be acknowledged that they completely justify this epithet.

These people are not absolute rovers as formerly, but yet they do not lead a sedentary life. They have two kinds of habitatious, one for summer, and the other for winter: the former is a tent of felt or birch bark, in the shape of a truncated cone; in the winter-hut there is but one apartment. Hamlets containing twenty such habitations are to be met with; but in summer it is rare to find more than twenty families in one place.

Pastoral pursuits are still their favorite occupation, though they have been com-

pelled to cultivate the ground. With the Baschkirs the horse is an indispensable animal; they are scarcely ever on foot. Their food chiefly consists of horse-flesh and mare's milk. The hide of the horse serves them for clothing, and with his hair they make ropes. They drink to intoxication of *kumiss*, and so general is this practice, that, as we are assured, in the evenings of summer not one sober man is to be found among them. Some of the Baschkirs keep camels. If they were to cultivate the naturally fertile soil of their country, they might live very comfortably: to induce them to do so, the government annually distributes fine scarlet dresses among the best husbandmen;

but they cannot yet be prevailed upon to addict themselves to agriculture. They might also derive considerable profit from the mines which they possess; but in general, when any hamlet discovers a vein or mine, the right of working it for sixty years is made over to some Russian speculator. In the government of Permia, however, there are Baschkirs who work the mines themselves and sell the ore to Russian foundries.

The Baschkirs, like the Tchuwasches, Tcheremisses and Mestsheraiks, keep a great quantity of bees. Besides the swarms which they have at home, some of them have several hundred, nay even a thousand swarms of wild bees in the woods. For this purpose the

Baschkir selects the thick trunk of a tree which has hard wood, and ascending to the height of twenty or thirty feet, by means of a strong rope composed of leather thongs, in the same manner that the African negro climbs the palm-tree,* he cuts a hole in the trunk, taking care to remove all the branches near it.

Not content with this precaution against the bear, which is well known to be extremely fond of honey, he drives several sharp knives or sickles with the edge upward into the trunk of the tree. The bear in climbing takes good care to avoid those dangerous weapons; but should he chance to slip backward, he

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* *See Africa in Miniature*, Vol. iii. p. 134.

falls upon them and is so severely cut that he seldom escapes with his life.

Some of the old bears are so cunning as to strike away these means of annoyance with their paws; and a different kind of snare is therefore laid for them. It is so contrived that the animal, as he begins to climb, pulls a cord, by which an arrow is discharged, that pierces him to the heart. Others again place a stout cudgel before the aperture of the hive, in such a manner that the animal must remove it before he can get at the honey: this he seeks to effect with great vehemence, but the cudgel strikes him every time, till at length he tumbles quite exhausted, and falls upon the

sharp instruments prepared for him below.

But the most ingenious method of taking these honey-stealers is the following :—Before the aperture of the hive a square board is suspended, in the manner of a swing, from a strong bent bough, tied down in that position by a cord. The bear, on reaching this sort of scaffold, breaks the cord in order to get at the hive, and the branch instantly recovers its natural position and removes the bear, seated in the swing, to a considerable distance from the bole of the tree. Here the marauder hangs till the next morning, and is dispatched by the bee-master, when he comes to in-

spect his hives: or he tumbles from his ticklish situation and is killed by the sharp spikes fixed in the ground to receive him.

The Baschkirs are not destitute of ingenuity: they make cloth of the commonnettle, which grows to a great height about their huts. For the same purpose they likewise employ hemp, which they dry upon their roofs, instead of steeping it in water; they then separate the outer fibre by pounding it in wooden mortars. They construct small water-mills, remarkable for their simplicity; and their looms display more skill than those ofthe other Tartars. They weave, scour, and dye cloth, make felt covers, and tan leather by means of sour milk

and chalk. By fumigation they render the hides of horses, oxen, and camels, of which they make water-bottles, as transparent as horn. These vessels, which are very light and strong, are in the shape of a nine-pin: the largest of them hold eight or nine pailfuls. Their drinking-cups are of birch-wood, and when well made, are equivalent in value to a horse. The women make most of these articles, while the men tend their flocks, or lie at their ease by the side of their kumiss-bottle.

Extraordinary stories are told of the voracity of the Baschkirs. One man will eat at a meal fifteen pounds of meat, and drink eight quarts of *kumiss*. This beverage is made by boiling mares' or

camels' milk and turning it with some of the former that is sour. It is not skimmed, because the cream of mares' milk will not yield butter of a firm consistence, and when soured is so palatable and nutritious, and likewise so strong, as not only to keep the Baschkirs in good condition, but even to intoxicate those who drink it to excess. Some few distil the kumiss after the manner of the Calmucks, and drink the spirit thus extracted: while others mix the kumiss with strong mead in order to produce the same effect.

One of their favourite dishes is the *bishbarmak*, or five-finger dish, so called because it is swallowed by handfuls.

It consists of hashed horse-flesh. Baschkirian politeness requires each person to cram a handful of this hash into his neighbour's mouth; and when they have public entertainments, every one strives to introduce a handful into the mouth of the chief, who has nothing to do but to digest the liberal supply. With this ravenous disposition, the Baschkirs find themselves rather straitened in winter: it is said that their condition during that season is truly pitiable; that they look like skeletons, and do not begin to recover their flesh till spring. In this statement there is probably some exaggeration, since it is known, that in winter the Baschkirs

live upon dried meat and fish, and smoked cheese; they also procure a small quantity of flour and oatmeal.

The Baschkirs have their amusements as well as other nations. They sing, and accompany their songs with gestures and intonations corresponding with the words. They are real pantomimes, which usually represent the heroic actions of the ancient Baschkirs, and so strongly affect the hearers and spectators, as to melt them into tears. As the mosquitoes are very troublesome in these parts, they have contrived a method of writing their songs on fans, of which they make constant use. The Baschkirs are skilful wrestlers; they are also good marksmen with the bow,

either standing or at full gallop. The women are never allowed to be present at any of these diversions.

Each Baschkir commonly has two wives but seldom more. In regard to marriage, the parents, unlike those in many other nations of this part of the world, consult the inclination of their daughters. If the young woman accepts the husband who is offered to her through an intermediate person, the father receives part of the *kalym*, or price paid for her, which consists of cattle: the poor pay for a wife from fifteen to twenty head, and the rich up to two hundred. Before the marriage, the girl takes leave of all the females of the hamlet, and afterwards of the

milk-vessel of the paternal habitation, which had fed her from the moment of her birth, and which she tenderly embraces at parting, with tears of affection and gratitude. After reciting some prayers, the priest unites the young couple, and delivers to the husband an arrow saying: "Be bold; support and protect thy wife." The husband then conducts his wife to his hut; a woman goes before them, proclaiming the portion of the bride. On entering the husband's habitation, the bride falls on her knees before his nearest relations: the festivities on the occasion last three days.

Though the Baschkirs have for ages professed the Mahometan faith, they

are grossly ignorant of its doctrines and are still attached to the superstitions of Shamanism. Among them sorcerers and exorcists are important characters: not an accident happens but their aid is summoned. In case of dangerous illness, a sorcerer is fetched, to expel the evil spirit, and the uproar that he makes frequently accelerates the death of the patient.

The dress of the Baschkirs (see the engraving) nearly resembles that of the Casan Tartars. Both sexes wear shirts, commonly of coarse linen made from nettles, long wide breeches, half-boots or slippers. The poor envelop their legs in rags and wear bark-shoes. The upper garments of the men are very

BACHKIR MAN.

Pub by R. Ackermann, London 1822.

long and wide; for these they prefer red cloth, bordered with fur, and they fasten them with a belt so that the under garment is not seen. Their winter garb consists of a sheep-skin, or more commonly a horse's hide, so contrived, that the mane hangs all the way down the back and produces in windy weather a most singular appearance. They shave the head, on which they wear a richly embroidered scull-cap, and over this another of cloth of a conical shape, with a narrow brim of fur. For travelling they have such ample trowsers that all their clothes can be tucked into them.

The upper robe of the women, of fine cloth or silk, is buttoned before

and fastened with a girdle round the waist. The neck and bosom are concealed by a cloth covered with pieces of money arranged like fish-scales, and sometimes by a net-work of glass-beads and shells. The unmarried females (see the engraving) who plait their hair in numerous tresses, fasten to them ribbons and various trinkets which hang down below the waist, and a cap with a long appendage behind, both covered with coin or beads. Besides the cap, matrons have a bandeau similarly garnished, and exhibit no tresses, or not more than two. In bad weather all the females wear thick Tartar veils.

The Baschkir language is evidently derived from the Tartar. In 1770 there

BASHKIR WOMAN.

Pub^d by R.Ackermann London 1803

were reckoned thirty-four villages or wolosts of Baschkirs, containing twenty seven thousand families. The Baschkirs serving in the Russian army are good horsemen and expert archers; they make their bows and arrows themselves, as well as the quivers, which they cover with bears'-skin. They wear coats of mail and long robes; some have only a bow and a lance, while others are armed with the European weapons in addition. Each Baschkir has two horses, one of which carries his provisions. They form squadrons or regiments, the officers of the former being chosen by themselves, but the commanders of regiments are appointed by the Russians. On a march they observe no

order, and never draw up till they halt. The government supplies them with provisions; but they are obliged to equip themselves at their own expense.

They are employed with success against the Kirghises, who fear and avoid them. The annexed plate represents the costume of a Baschkir chief.

BASHKIR CHIEF.

CHAP. VII.

THE BARABINZES.

The Barabinzes inhabit a tract called by themselves Baraba, situated in the government of Tobolsk, between the Ob and the Irtisch. They are divided into seven tribes, or *wolosts,* which occupy sixty-eight villages. Each wolost has its chief or petty prince.

The Barabinzes resemble upon the whole the other Tartars, but many of them betray in their physiognomy a mixture of Calmuck blood. The constantly damp and foggy atmosphere of the Baraba gives them a pale, un-

healthy look. To this cause, as well as to the want of instruction and poverty, we may probably ascribe their manifest simplicity, their great insensibility, even to love, and their extraordinary temperance.

In their way of life, the Barabinzes differ but little from the Baschkirs. Like the latter, they dwell in villages in winter, and in *yurts* in summer. Their chief occupation is rearing cattle; but many subsist by fishing in their numerous lakes.

Their winter habitations differ from those of the Baschkirs, in having a small building in front of the principal one, and an aperture in the roof, not merely for the admission of light and

air, but also on account of the snow, which sometimes buries their huts. They are then obliged to get out at the roof, to clear away the snow from the doors. Like some other Tartars they have in the midst of the dwelling-room a wooden mortar, sunk in the ground, with a pestle which is worked by means of a lever. Their summer *yurts* are composed of long poles stuck into the ground, drawn together at top in the form of a bee-hive, and covered with mats of reeds. When they remove to another situation the skeletons of these *yurts* are always left standing.

The costume of the men is that of the Tartars in general. The women

wear the hair plaited in two tresses, adorned with ribbons, and cover the head with a low hat. Unmarried females have a greater number of tresses and wear smaller pointed hats. In some wolosts they have caps covered with glass beads, similar to those of the Baschkir women, and in all the veil is in general use. In summer they go about chiefly in chemises of coarse cloth made from nettles, held together in front by a row of buttons. On extraordinary occasions they appear in long robes of cotton or other stuffs, over which they wear a shorter coat, in order that the under garments may be seen.

Part of the occupation of the women consists in tanning the skins of the bel-

lies of divers, *(colimbi)*, or other water-fowl, with the feathers on, for the purpose of making pelisses, caps, and other articles. These feathered garments keep the wearer extremely warm; they are impermeable to wet, and stronger than would be supposed.

In their manners the Barabinzes bear a close resemblance to the Baschkirs. Few of them have more than one wife, whom they purchase at the rate of from five to fifty rubles, nay, many a man obtains a healthy serviceable girl for two or three.

In their food they are still less delicate than the Baschkirs. Though they have forsaken the Shaman paganism,

and embraced the Mahometan religion, they do not hesitate to eat beasts of prey and cattle which have died a natural death. As they do not keep many cattle they have recourse in summer to various species of wild roots, herbs and berries, and in winter subsist chiefly on dried fish. A favourite dish, which they call *astigai,* consists of fresh mares' or cows' milk, which is boiled in an iron pot that communicates a reddish colour to it, and which may be kept in this state for winter use.

This nation is extremely ignorant and by no means free from its ancient pagan superstitions. The Barabinzes still have among them sorcerers and

magicians, and many deposit various implements and food with the dead. Few of their priests can read and still fewer understand Arabic.

CHAP. VIII.

THE KIRGHISES.

The Kirghises, or Kirghis Cossacks, form a numerous nation, divided into three hordes, which have their respective khans. They dwell in the vast *steppes* of Independent Tartary, particularly to the north and east of Lake Aral. The great horde is still independent, but the middle and little hordes placed themselves, in 1732, under the protection of Russia, in order to obtain security from the incursions of the Soongares and Baschkirs. They are comprehended in the govern-

ment of Orenburg, and are masters of the *steppes* extending between the Ural, the Sarasou, the Caspian Sea, and the Siberian line, to the entrenchments of Ischim. They pay no tribute but receive, on the contrary, annual presents. Their language, the pronunciation of which is very harsh, and which abounds with metaphors, very nearly approaches to the genuine Tartar

The Kirghises are a roving and pastoral people: their wealth consists in horses, sheep, camels, oxen, and cows; but, in general, they are better pleased with what they derive from pillage. They are always booted, and on horseback. They are familiar with the

trade of robbery, which is constantly practised by such as are still independent, and from which those who live under the protection of the Russian government do not always abstain. That government had formerly much to fear from them, and it cannot yet place implicit confidence in the contracts which it makes with these people. The Kirghises take good care not to commit any act of hostility on the frontiers of Russia when their herds are grazing there; but no sooner are their cattle in safety, than they seek quarrels, and conceal themselves in ravines, whence they sally forth upon caravans, or upon the neighbouring villages. The Russian government se-

cures their fidelity by hostages selected from among the khans and nobles, and these hostages receive a stipulated salary.

It is not improbable that the Kirghises of the Russian empire will eventually adopt a sedentary life, like the Baschkirs. The advantages which they might derive from their commerce with the Russians are at least calculated to rouse their industry. The town of Orenburg is the mart for this commerce, to which the Kirghises take horses of a good breed, horned cattle, and sheep of extraordinary size: of the latter only, it is computed that one hundred and fifty thousand are annually sold there. They also barter at the

same place lambs', foxes', and wolves' skins, camels' hair, and some fine wool, for articles that they want, such as cloth, culinary and other utensils, harness, &c. They make their clothes of skins, their caps of felt, and their shirts of blue linen cloth; the garments of the rich are composed of foals' skins and woollen cloth, and their caps of embroidered stuff. The winter cap is adorned with furs, the four corners of which hang loose before and behind. They also wear hats with broad brims scalloped in front, as shewn in the annexed plate. A European would not be able to wear their boots, which are turned up at the toe, and end in a point, that serves the

KIRGHIGES.

Pub.d by R. Ackermann London 1822.

purpose of a spur; the sole is covered with a piece of iron fastened on with nails. Their garments are wide, and thick, and girt with a belt, in which a dagger is stuck.

The costume of the Kirghisian women, one of whom is represented in the engraving, is upon the whole very much like that of the Casan Tartar females. The head is usually covered with a veil, and on extraordinary occasions they wear caps, like those of the Baschkir women covered with pieces of money and beads. Many, especially of the higher class, envelop the head in stuffs of various sorts, in the form of a high turban, and dress in fine cloth, silks, rich stuffs,

and very frequently in velvet, bordered with gold lace or otter fur.

The habitations of the Kirghises are *kibitkis*, or felt-tents, some of which are large enough to accommodate twenty persons. The rich have several of them; but the only furniture to be seen in these habitations consists of chests, leather bottles, and bowls. The arms and clothes are hung up on the sides: sometimes stuff of different colours and even silks are to be seen among them.

Many of the Kirghises enrich themselves by their herds; there are some who possess ten thousand horses, as many sheep, from two to five hundred camels, and several thousand cows and

goats. A Kirghise in moderate circumstances has from fifty to one hundred horses, as many cows, from ten to twenty camels, a hundred sheep, and fifty goats. The *steppes* of Tartary yield excellent pasturage, and are extremely favourable to the propagation of all these animals. The sheep in particular grow to an extraordinary size, some being as large as the common ass, and having tails that weigh from thirty to forty pounds each. The lambs are so delicious, that a certain number of them are sent annually from Orenburg to Petersburg for the imperial kitchens.

Next to the Bucharian lamb-skins those of the Kirghises are in the greatest request, and being much cheaper,

they are an important article of trade. They are of various colours, white, black, bluish gray, speckled and sorrel. The best have a gloss like the Bucharians and are flowered like damask; those of inferior quality are finely curled: but the worst have straight wool. In order to produce the qualities which give these skins their chief value, the Kirghises sew a linen cloth round the body of the lamb just after it is dropped, and when the growth of the animal bursts this envelope, they kill it for the sake of its skin. The wool of the sheep not treated in this manner is extremely coarse, and is employed only for making felts and coarse cloth for their own use.

The flesh of the large-tailed sheep,

and the natural or distilled milk of mares or camels, are the ordinary food of the Kirghises; they obtain flour and oatmeal from Russia and Bucharia. They eat likewise the flesh of camels and other animals which they keep.

Hunting is one of the amusements of the Kirghises: there are few who pursue it as a source of subsistence: yet those who reside on the banks of the Irtisch, where game abounds, might derive from it great advantages. The princes and nobles follow the chase for pleasure alone. For this purpose they keep greyhounds, and a particular species of falcon, the *falco fulvus* of Linneus, which they call in their language *birkout*. They train this bird, and teach

him to strike his talons into the eyes of the animal which they are pursuing. Overpowered by the pain, the latter stops till the huntsmen come up, and lash their victim to death with their whips.

The woods of the Kirghisian territory abound with that curious little animal the jerboa *(mus jaculus)*, or jumping hare. It may be called the kangaroo in miniature, having the same form, although not larger than a squirrel, and assisting itself with its tail in leaping, or rather hopping along like a bird, on its hinder legs. The fore-legs are extremely short, and are chiefly used by the animal to feed itself and to dig holes: the hinder, on the other hand, are as long as the whole body, including the

head; and on these it erects itself when in motion. The ears, resembling those of a hare,and the very long tail, terminating in a large tuft, give the animal when standing upright a very singular appearance. When pursued it makes leaps of six or eight feet with incredible velocity. Pallas relates that the jerboas which he saw occasionally in the Kirghisian steppe, seemed rather to fly than to leap, and that the fleet horses of his Cossack escort were unable to overtake them. No sooner do they touch the ground than they are again seen flying through the air, till they reach their holes.

Clarke relates that in his journey in the Crimea a jerboa was caught by his party, though not without some difficulty,

adding, we should not have succeeded but for the cracking of a large whip, the noise of which terrified it so much that it lost all recollection of its burrow. Its leaps were extraordinary for so small an animal: sometimes to the distance of six or eight yards, but in no determinate direction: it bounded backward and forward, without ever quitting the vicinity of the place where it was found. The most singular circumstance in its nature is the power it possesses of altering its course when in the air. It first leaps perpendicularly to the height of four feet or more; and then by a motion of its tail, with a clicking noise, strikes off in whatever direction it chooses.

The colour of the jerboa is reddish on

the back and light gray on the belly. It burrows in the ground, lives on roots and grass, of which it forms piles before its hole and is easily tamed.

The arms of the Kirghises, who, when required, furnish a certain contigent to the military force of Russia, are the lance, the bow, the sabre and the musket; but the latter is still very imperfect with them. At the end of it they have a wooden or iron fork by way of bayonet, as may be seen in the representation of the Kirghise soldier in the engraving opposite to page 98. They employ a match for the purpose of discharging it, so that when it rains they can scarcely use it at all. M. Rytchkow, in his journal of a tour

among these people, says, that the Kirghises understand the art of making black and white gunpowder, but keep the process a profound secret. They might derive considerable profit from the salt lakes, marble quarries, and metallic ores, with which their country abounds. As they become familiar with European luxury, and the conveniences of civilized nations, the inadequacy of their own articles of trade will probably compel them to recur to those sources of wealth, which atpresent they disdain, or of which they are even ignorant.

The Kirghises are Mahometans, but they pay little regard to their religion; at least they are strangers to its doc-

trines and rites, having no other priests than the mollahs who come among them, or whom they take prisoners: they have, on the other hand, many magicians, and the superstitions of Shamanism are widely diffused among them. In literature they are equally ignorant. Their manners are harsh and rude; if they do not put their prisoners to death, they make slaves of them. It is said that the Kirghisian women are, on the contrary, kind, and that they frequently alleviate the lot of the prisoners doomed to perpetual slavery.

The Kirghises purchase their wives like the other Tartars, and marry as many as they can maintain; the rich having sometimes three or four wives,

and nine or ten concubines. The wives of the nobles live in close seclusion, and are never seen but when the horde changes its place of abode. With them, as among the Calmucks, that day is a festival: the women, sure of being seen by all the men of the horde, dress themselves in their best apparel. The Kirghises have a strong predilection for Calmuck women, and often carry them off with great address.

There is a trait in the manners of these people that reminds us of remote antiquity: each family has a chief or patriarch, who decides all disputes that arise. The Kirghises, however, are far from leading the frugal life of the ancient nations of the East. They

intoxicate themselves with *kumiss* and tobacco, which they smoke incessantly, and swallow the smoke, which at length stupifies them. In winter they generally indulge in disgraceful sloth, and acquire a corpulence which is far from improving their personal appearance, originally not the most prepossessing. Their habit of being on horseback makes their legs deformed: they have a flat nose, wide nostrils, very small eyes, and thick lips. When young, their faces are tolerable; when old, they are ugly, and even frightful. The Kirghises shave the head; the young men wear mustaches, and the old suffer the beard to grow, but shave the lower lip to the point of the chin.

The horse may be termed the companion of the Kirghise; he takes great care of this animal, and is fond of seeing him richly caparisoned. In his amusements horse-races hold the first rank. At the funerals of nobles, prizes, consisting of horses, harness, slaves, camels, or cattle, are given to those who distinguish themselves in such races. The Kirghise pursues his game on horseback, and when he takes the field for war, each man commonly has with him two or three horses: thus the marches of these people are very rapid, and the number of horses which they have in their service enables them to retreat with great expedition, and to escape with ease from their enemies.

The Kirghises are proud; they look upon service as a disgrace: the poor indeed tend the herds of the rich, but they never degrade themselves so far as to become their domestic servants: hence they have no other persons in this capacity than slaves. They have several classes of nobility: the *sultans*, or princes, form the first. They are the chiefs of the nation: they possess, however, a very limited authority, their principal power depending on their wealth, and the party which they gain among the lower class of the people.

The number of the Kirghises of the middle and little horde amounts to about three hundred and fifty or four

hundred thousand. The great horde is more numerous.

Though the Russian government not only offers these people medical advice from Orenburg whenever they need it, but also supplies them gratuitously with medicine, they very seldom avail themselves of this liberality, probably owing to the influence of their sorcerers. There is no disease of which they have so great a horror as the small-pox. When a person has the misfortune to be attacked by it, they place near him a supply of food and drink, and abandon him to his fate. Should the patient afterwards quit his habitation, they make no scruple to dispatch him with their arrows.

All the Kirghises of both sexes are immoderately fond of tobacco and snuff. Their ordinary pipes are made by themselves with the leg-bones of sheep; some, however, use short Chinese pipes, and others wooden ones. Their smoking parties are really curious. Having selected a suitable situation, they water a spot of ground and thrusting the handle of a whip into the moist earth, form a hole of sufficient dimensions, which they fill with tobacco. This is lighted with amadou, on which the company take their places round the hole. Each sticks the dry hollow stalk of some herb or other into the earth, in such a manner as to touch the tobacco at the bottom of the hole;

and lying on his belly, smokes away without molesting or being molested by the rest. In this manner, their heads meeting near one common centre are constantly enveloped in thick smoke, which the more speedily produces its intoxicating effect.

CHAP. IX.

THE YAKUTES.

These people, one of the most numerous of the roving Tartar nations of Russia, chiefly inhabit the province of Yakutzk, and the banks of the Lena, in the province of Irkutzk, occupying a tract two thousand wersts in extent. They were formerly seated more to the southward, in the Sayan mountains, and on the lower Angara; but, according to a tradition preserved by them, they were driven from these more fertile regions by the superior force of the Buraits, and descending the Lena

on rafts with their cattle, settled in their present abodes. There is still in fact a considerable difference between their cattle and those of the neighbouring nations.

When they became known to the Russians, about the year 1620, the Yakutes were not very easily subdued; but the feuds between their own tribes facilitated their reduction; and since 1630 they have been tributary to Russia. The whole nation is conjectured to amount to about 120,000 persons. Sauer asserts that since 1780 their population and wealth have rapidly decreased, owing partly to the oppression of the agents of government and of their own chiefs, and partly to the use

of spirituous liquors, and the diseases communicated to them by their masters. The decline of their prosperity is indeed demonstrated by the diminution of their herds, the only standard of wealth among them. There were formerly Yakutes who possessed twenty thousand head of horses and horned cattle: at present, two thousand are considered as a very large stock.

The Yakutes have in general a good constitution, capable of enduring the most intense heat and cold. They have meagre faces, rather flat, small eyes, and black hair and beard. These people, like the inhabitants of some of the South Sea Islands, afford a striking instance of the powerful influence of

food on the human body. Such of them as dwell in the plains watered by the rivers Wilui, Aldan and Uda, are in general near six feet high; whereas those to the north of the mountains of Werchnoyarsk are below the middling stature, unhealthy, indolent, and poor. This difference arises not more from the severity of the climate, than from the worse fare of the latter.

These people have few wants: a knife, a hatchet, a pot, and a flint and steel, suffice for their whole domestic economy. The former of these implements they make themselves with iron from the mines of Wilui, and they surpass in quality any of those manufactured by the Russians. In their distant

hunting expeditions, they carry with them no other provisions than a small quantity of *kumiss*, leaving the rest to chance. If they are not fortunate enough to meet with animal food, they subsist on roots and the inner bark of the pine and birch. Scarcely any thing comes amiss to them; they eat frogs and insects, rats, weasels, and all sorts of beasts and birds of prey.

The Yakutes, who, in case of need, are content with next to nothing, are incredibly voracious when they have opportunities of indulging their appetites. Lessep was astonished at the quantity of *burdac* consumed by the Yakutes who were assigned to him for an escort though Siberia. For an or-

dinary stomach this is not a very digestible dish, consisting of a soft pudding made of rye-meal, and train-oil. He was assured that a very small number of Yakutes will eat up at one of their entertainments a whole roasted horse. Admiral Sarytscheff, who was also struck by the gluttony of the Yakutes, resolved to try the powers of one of their greatest eaters, who had consumed four *poods* of butter and two of flour, equal together to two hundred and forty pounds, in a fortnight, and nevertheless complained of hunger. He was a short, meagre man, who was reported by his countrymen to have several times devoured a hind quarter of a large ox, and drunk half a *pood* of

melted butter in the space of twenty-four hours. The admiral therefore ordered a thick pudding of rye-meal to be cooked, and about three pounds of butter to be mixed with it. The mess weighed about twenty-eight pounds. Though this gormandizer had previously breakfasted, he fell to work with great avidity and swallowed the whole before he stirred from the spot. His body indeed was so distended as to resemble a stuffed sack, but he sustained no inconvenience or ill consequences, and would next day have had no objection to such another treat.

Like most of the roving nations, the Yakutes have different habitations for winter and summer. The former are

composed of logs, the interstices between which are filled with moss. In the centre of the roof there is an aperture, for the admission of light and the escape of the smoke from the fire-place in the middle of the floor. A summer *yurt* is a conical frame of poles, covered on the outside with birch-bark. With this material also they contrive in journeys to make large umbrellas, under shelter of which they sleep at night.

The principal occupations of these people consist in the management of their cattle, hunting and fishing. The southern tribes keep horses and oxen, which, even in winter, are obliged to seek their own subsistence; and the

northern possess reindeer. The women, besides attending to the domestic concerns, have to take care of the cattle, and to make the wearing apparel of the family. The skins of elks, reindeer, horses, and horned cattle furnish the Yakutes with rudely tanned leather, of which they make their clothing. Instead of thread, they use the nerves of those animals, with which they work a kind of embroidery at the collar and at the seams.

In their dress the Yakutes surpass the neighbouring Tartars. Next to the body they wear in summer garments made of very soft leather, and in winter the skins of reindeer. The breeches are very short, and to these are fastened

the tops of their leather stockings, or rather boots, being provided with soles, which are made to fit quite tight to the leg and thigh, and being often wrought and embroidered, have a very neat appearance. The upper garment is a coat of skin with tight sleeves: the skirt reaches down to the knees. It is fastened in front with strings. The collar and edges are neatly wrought and embroidered, and even adorned with a fringe of horse-hair of different colours. In winter they wear a fur cap, but in summer go bare-headed.

The costume of the women resembles that of the men, but their garments are still more neatly wrought. On extraordinary occasions they wear over

the coat a shorter vest without sleeves, of the finest leather, or of scarlet cloth, not only bordered with fringe but also embroidered with white and blue beads. Married women cover the head with a cap, cut out of the skin of some animal, in such a manner that the ears stand upright and resemble horns. The skins are made impermeable to water, by being steeped in blood, then smoked, afterwards rubbed with pulverized charcoal and grease, and again exposed to the smoke of the fire. Unmarried females plait the hair in tresses, and merely wear a bandeau covered with embroidery and beads; from which a string of beads hangs down on either side. A piece of stuff

about eighteen inches long and four broad, adorned with pearls or beads, also falls from the top of the head down the back.

Polygamy is common among the Yakutes: some of them have so many as six wives, but the first wife always enjoys a certain pre-eminence over the others. They reside in separate huts and such of them as behave amiss are sent back to their parents. When a young man has taken a fancy to a girl, he sends one of his friends to her father to inquire the price, that is, how many horses or head of cattle he demands for her, and how much horse-flesh or beef he shall want for the entertainment to be given on the occa-

sion. The father consults the inclination of his daughter, and if she has no objection to the match, the price is agreed upon. The young man kills two fat mares, dresses the meat, and repairs with his friends to the residence of the girl's father. One of the party, carrying the head of one of the beasts, enters the hut, lays the head down before the fire, and returns in silence to his companions. They then all go in together. The Shaman, or priest, stands opposite to the fire: the suitor kneels down with his face toward the fire, to which he makes three obeisances. The priest declares him a fortunate man, and predicts a long series of happy years.

The lover rises, salutes the father and mother of the bride, and without uttering a word seats himself opposite to the latter The meat prepared for the purpose is then brought in, and distributed by the father of the girl among his own friends; at the same time he sets before his new guests the flesh of a fat mare killed by himself. When supper is over, the suitor retires to rest. The bride, who is not present at the supper, is brought back to the hut by a matron, who conducts her to the nuptial bed. Next morning the friends return home, but the husband remains three or four days at his father-in-law's. The day is then fixed for the payment of the stipulated price. The

live animals and the meat are accordingly delivered to the father-in-law in the presence of several friends, who are again entertained on this occasion. The husband again stays three or four days, and fixes the time when he will fetch his wife. She is conducted by a number of women to his habitation, and during this ceremony her face is covered with ermine. The door is barred by a very slender piece of wood, which the wife pushes against and breaks. She then goes in and seats herself by the fire. Into her hands are put seven small sticks, and bits of butter, which she throws into the fire: the priest pronounces certain favourable words, after which she rises and with her face still

covered, is led to the new hut prepared for her. Here she throws off her veil; her husband soon joins her, and the guests are entertained for two days.

When a Yakute dies, he is dressed in his best apparel, and with his arms bound down to his waist, is deposited in a very thick coffin, with a knife, flint, steel, tinder, and some meat, that he may not want in his way to the region of spirits. A priest presides at the funeral; and the wives and relatives accompany the procession. The favourite horse of the deceased is saddled and caparisoned, and carrying a hatchet, a caldron and other utensils, he is conducted together with a fat mare to the place of sepulture. Two graves are dug

under a tree. The coffin is put into one and the horse is then killed and thrown into the other. The mare is also slaughtered, dressed and eaten by the persons who have attended the funeral, and the skin is hung up on the tree that overshadows the grave. The priest conjures the dæmons not to molest the spirit of the deceased, and the ceremony concludes with filling up the grave.

Formerly they were accustomed to burn their dead, or to place them in trees to decay in the air. According to their traditions, servants who were attached to their masters, on the decease of the latter, voluntarily threw themselves into a fire kindled for the purpose, that they might attend them in the other world.

The graves found along the Yenesci seem to confirm the existence of this pagan, lamaite and braminical practice, which was common also among the ancient Swedes and Danes; for a second skeleton, or at least the ashes, probably, those of some favourite, are frequently found in them. At present they bury their dead in woods, and so anxious are they to be laid beneath trees, that many choose in their life-time the trees under which they desire to be interred.

Upon the whole the Yakutes enjoy excellent health. Putrid fevers, however, sometimes break out, and the small-pox also makes great havoc among them, especially since it is their custom to forsake the patient, with whom they leave a

small supply of provisions. To restore limbs that are frost-bitten they employ a salve made of clay and fresh cow-dung, with such extraordinary success that this remedy has been adopted by the Russians.

The Yakutes are represented as humane and very hospitable. They pay great respect to age, and in their language a sage and an old man are synonimous. Theft is very rare among them; but these good qualities are counterbalanced by the vindictive spirit which animates them to transmit their revenge and cruelty to their descendants.

They give their children the most disagreeable names, under the idea that fine names would entice the evil spirits.

For this reason every Yakute has two names, and is never called by his proper one.

Superstition governs all the actions of the Yakutes, who are professors of the Shaman idolatry. The prevailing sentiment in their religion is the fear of evil spirits, of whem they reckon twenty-seven tribes. When a man dies, his hut is abandoned to these spirits, and a deceased person is never named. The art of appeasing these spirits belongs exclusively to the Shamans. The young men who devote themselves to this profession pass great part of their time in sequestered woods, and are taught by the older Shamans what places the dæmons inhabit in preference.

Young females also are admitted, but not without difficulty, into the order of Shamans.

The true God is called in the Yakute language Tangra, but the creation of the world is attributed to another deity, whom they name Aar Toyon. The messenger of the gods, the Mercury of the Yakutes, is called Ouchsyt, whom they pretend to see sometimes in the form of a white horse. They believe also that there is a divinity in the sun. To these beneficent deities they annually offer sacrifices. They have other solemn festivals, which begin in the month of June and last a fortnight. For this purpose they erect in a meadow a spacious summer-hut, covered externally with

birch-bark, having a fire-place in the centre, and decorated with green birch boughs both within and without. Here the family, friends and Shamans or priests, assemble. The latter occupy the first places and the other persons present seat themselves according to seniority. The principal Shaman rises and calls one of the company, whom he knows to be perfectly pure; that is to say, who has not seen a corpse for a month, and who has never been charged with theft or with bearing false witness against any man. Him he orders to take a cup, to fill it with *kumiss*, and to place himself near the fire with his face towards the east: hereupon he thrice pours some of the *kumiss* on the

fire as an offering to the supreme God, Aar-Toyon; then turns toward the south and repeats the ceremony for Kouley-Khatoun (the *Glorious*, regarded by them as the wife of the chief god); then to the west, for the spirits of the air; and lastly to the north for the subterraneous spirits.

The principal Shaman then advances and pronounces bare-headed a prayer, in which he thanks the supreme god for his favours and implores a continuance of them. He afterwards takes the cup, drinks some of the liquor, and passes it round to the other Shamans, after which it circulates through the rest of the assembly. The women are not allowed to be present at this ceremony;

but they assemble at some distance from the men, and drink, dance and amuse themselves. When all the Yakutes have drunk out of the cup, they quit the hut and sit down in semicircles on branches of birch. Each semicircle has its cup, a stock of kumiss, and a Shaman to preside. The latter fills the cup and hands it round. On these occasions an incredible quantity of the liquor is drunk. As soon as the principal ceremonies are over, races, wrestling and leaping-matches, and other exercises commence. The conquerors in these contests are considered as highly-favoured by the gods.

When a Yakute is ill, a Shaman is sent for to call forth the dæmons

and to inquire the cause of their anger against the unfortunate man. Having called them he stands still, starts back trembling vehemently, listens some time, then approaches the patient and looks at his hands. He informs him that the spirits have a mind to take away his life, but that they may be appeased by the sacrifice of a fine mare, a fat cow, or some other animal. The victim is soon found, and next morning led to the place destined for its sacrifice, which is always an eminence situated on the skirt of a wood. An altar is erected, on which the victim is slaughtered and skinned. The flesh is cooked and eaten on the spot. The bones are then wrapped in the skin and placed on the top of

a tree. After the sacrifice the sorcerer performs his grand incantations, skipping, leaping, and making all sorts of grimaces. In an authoritative tone he commands the dæmons to retire to their usual place of abode. From time to time he seems ready to swoon, and it is at these moments that he learns what is to be the fate of the patient. Should the first sacrifice prove unavailing, it is followed by others till the patient either recovers or dies. In particular sacrifices the Shaman repairs to the hut of the person who has required his attendance, and having there slaughtered the victim places himself before the fire, holding in his hand one of the small idols or household gods, which he besmears

Pl.

YAKOUT PRIEST.

.d by R. Ackermann [illegible]

with the blood contained in the heart of the victim, and then proceeds to his incantations. The annexed engraving represents the costume of a Shaman, or priest equipped for such an occasion.

CHAP. X.

THE TCHERKASSES, OR CIRCASSIANS.

The Caucasus, a species of isthmus covered with mountains and glaciers, between the Black and Caspian Seas, exhibits this singularity, that there the vegetable productions and the natives of the different regions of Europe and Asia seem to be collected. At the foot of fields of ice and barren rocks are found fertile hills, rich pastures, plains planted with the vine, the olive, the cypress, the cedar, the date, the jujube, the fig and the laurel: while the vales are perfumed by the jessamine, the se-

ringa and the Caucasian rose. The luxuriant and brilliant vegetation of Asia is separated from the creeping shrubs of Europe only by a height of a few thousand feet. Large rivers intersect these mountainous regions, receiving in their course the tribute of numberless streams. Here rise immense forests inhabited by wild boars, wolves, bears and jackals; there are spread beautiful lakes, or marshes covered with curious plants; and wild and picturesque situations are intermingled with the most enchanting scenery. Nature seems here to have crowded all her beauties into a narrow compass; and the extent of her bounty is not yet known either to foreigners or to the natives themselves.

In a historical point of view the Caucasus is equally remarkable. In all ages this country has been the regular passage for nations removing from Europe to Asia or from Asia into Europe. The Argonauts gave it celebrity among the Greeks. In the revolutions of Persia, Turkey and Tartary, foreigners have here sought an asylum from the barbarity of the conquerors. The Medes, the Alani, the Avares, the Polovzes, the Jews and even the Genoese, have left traces of their sojournment in this country. These emigrations, these passages, these intermixtures, have collected in the Caucasus all sorts of nations, whence it has justly been observed, that this region furnishes living witnesses of the cala-

mities of the world. Some writers have even sought in it the cradle of the human race; but though various traditions respecting the early ages coinciding with the history given in the Scripture are current there, it is possible that they may have been introduced by some of the foreign nations who have settled in the country.

It would be vain to attempt to describe all the different nations that are to be met with in the Caucasus. The traveller in many cases need but proceed from one village to another to find a different nation, a different language and different customs. In this confusion the celebrity of the Tcherkasses or Circassians, and the Georgians, and their more inti-

mate connection with Russia have decided us in selecting them for particular description. A general outline of the nations of these parts may in fact be drawn in a very few words: a strong constitution, handsome face, graceful figure, extraordinary agility, great indifference to religion, a dislike of agriculture, but a decided propensity to plunder, a crafty mind and hospitable manners—such are the characteristic features of them all.

The most celebrated nation of the Caucasus is the Tcherkasses, called by Europeans the Circassians. They are considered as the descendants of the Zyches, who, according to ancient authors, inhabited the banks of the Black

Sea, and of the Kerketes, of whom Strabo makes mention. These were probably the aborigines of the Caucasus. The name of Tcherkasse does not occur in history till about the fourteenth century. Tcherkasse is a Tartar word, not the name adopted by these people, who call themselves *Adigué*. Their establishments were formerly far more widely extended towards the north: at present they are bounded in that quarter by three rivers, the Terek, the Malka, and the Kuban. The Tcherkasses formerly resident in the Crimea were probably a colony of those of the Caucasus.

Before the Russians extended their empire into these mountains, the Tcherkasses possessed paramount authority

over the Ossetes, Abasses and Tchetchenges, and various Tartar mountain tribes: but they have lost these great advantages, and now occupy the country of the Kabarda, which is divided into the Great and Little: whence they are denominated Ghabartie by the Tchetchenges.

The whole nation is divided into five classes: the *pschi*, or princes: the *work*, or ancient nobility, whom the Russians style *ousden*, the freedmen of these princes and nobles: and, lastly, the *tchekotl*, or serfs, called by the Russions *cholopi*. We shall first treat of each of these five classes separately, and then proceed to the general characteristics of the nation.

The Tcherkassian princes are neither so numerous nor so powerful as formerly: they pretend to derive their origin from Arab-khan, asserting that their progenitor was an Arab, as his name would indicate: but this statement is doubtful. In the *Description of Southern Russia* by Pallas may be seen their genealogy, beginning with Inal, who lived about the middle of the fifteenth century, and who is said to have been the grandson of Arab-khan.

The princes maintain in full force the ancient feudal system: they are the liege lords of the nobles; and the latter in their turn treat their inferiors as serfs. To each reigning family is attached a certain number of nobles, with

their vassals. When ever the prince requires it, the ousden are obliged to furnish as many vassals as he demands, and to accompany him with them, either to make incursions into the Russian territories, or to fight the Ossetes, the Ingushes, the Karabulaks, and the tribes residing towards the Kuban. The princes and ousden possess the power of life and death over their serfs, and may sell those who serve under them. If the princes, from extravagance or misfortunes, contract debts, the ousden are obliged to pay them: in like manner the serfs are forced to discharge those of their lords. According to ancient custom, the princes from time to time make presents to their

ousden. Both the giver and receiver carefully treasure up the circumstance in their memory, and transmit it to their children, that their descendants may know on what occasion they were generous and deserved to be rewarded; but if an ousden refuses obedience to his prince, and forsakes him for another, he is obliged to return all the presents, which himself and his ancestors have received from him.

Formerly each prince, or a son of a prince, had a right to choose a sheep from each of the flocks that were driven in summer to pasture on the mountains, and from all that were brought back at the beginning of autumn. If, in his military expeditions, he passed the night

near a sheep-fold, he had a right to one of the animals: if he passed a *taboun*, or herd of horses, he might take one for his own use, as long as he had occasion for it. If he remained near this herd, he and his retinue regaled themselves with a foal: but they relinquished these privileges at the introduction of Islamism.

Among no nation is the pride of birth carried to such a pitch as among the Tcherkasses. A prince marries only the daughter of a prince; and it is asserted, that an unequal match has never been witnessed in that country. An ousden who should carry off a princess would incur the penalty of death. The natural sons of a prince cannot obtain their

father's title except by marrying princesses; and in this case they become only princes of the third class. Because the Abasses were formerly subject to the Tcherkasses, the Tcherkassian ousden now considers himself as the equal of an Abassian prince, and marries his daughter: while the latter cannot aspire to a higher alliance than with the family of an ousden: were he to seek the hand of a princess, it would be thought an unpardonable presumption. When a Tcherkassian prince designs to marry, he pays to the father of his intended wife a *kalim*, of the value of two thousand rubles, consisting of arms, horses, and cattle; and he is presented in return, by his father-in-law, with a

certain number of slaves. The princes celebrate the birth of a child with extraordinary festivities. If it is a boy, he is consigned, the day after his birth to the care of an ousden, to be educated, or more correctly speaking, to be taught to hunt, plunder, and fight. This is an honour eagerly coveted by the nobles. At the same time a nurse is chosen for the infant: she gives him a name: the ousden performs the duty of a father, and the prince does not see his son again till he marries. The ousden looks out for a wife for him, and pays the father-in-law the *kalim*, to which he contributes with the other ousden.

The sons of the ousden continue in their father's house till they are three

or four years old; they are then put out to an instructor or guardian, with whom they remain till they marry. Though obliged to feed and clothe them, this guardian receives not the smallest remuneration from the parents; but if his foster-son, during his residence with him goes to war, or upon a predatory expedition, the best part of the plunder is allotted to him, in the same manner as Chiron the Centaur shared the booty of his pupil Achilles. Hunting and military exercises are the habitual amusements of the princes and ousden. They frequently make excursions of several days into the forests and mountains. This independent and half-savage life has such charms for them,

that many of them have not been able to relinquish it, even after they have tasted in Russia the enjoymeats of civilization. Klaproth mentions several examples of this kind in his Travels in the Caucasus.

Nothing can be more beautiful than the equipment of the Tcherkassian princes and ousden when they go to war, or upon extraordinary occasions. Kimmel has justly observed, that there is no nation whose army can exhibit a more brilliant spectacle. They are then armed in the manner of the ancient knights, wearing a cuirass or coat of mail, a large helmet, gauntlets, coverings for the thighs and arms, in short, all the pieces of armour employed by

our heroes of old, excepting the buckler, to the use of which they are strangers. To this antique and brilliant suit, made of fine iron or steel, ornamented with silver, they add the sabre, carbine, and pistol; on parade days they also carry a quiver, bow and arrows. The making of armour is the principal employment of the Tcherkassian smiths and silversmiths; armour of very good quality is also brought from Dagestan, and the country of the Abchass on the Black Sea. The ousden, so far from selling theirs, transmit it carefully to their descendants. The complete armour of a prince costs about two thousand rubles. It is asserted, that there are cuirasses so well made that a pistol

bullet cannot pierce them. As a farther precaution, the ousden wear under their armour a padded dress, which deadens blows; but it is asserted that the Cossacks are dexterous enough to raise the corner of the cuirass, even when going at full gallop, and to pierce the wearer.

The opposite plate represents a Tcherkassian clothed in armour, and provided with a peculiar weapon which is sometimes used by them. This weapon is a thick stick having a large iron ball at one end and a sharp point at the other; it is thrown lik e a javelin and seems to resemble the javelins called *plumbatæ*, used by the Illyrian legions in the time of Dioclesian.

CIRCASSIAN WARRIOR.

[illegible] London 18[illegible]

One of the most important occupations of these warlike men is, to keep their arms and armour in order; they are incessantly cleaning them, and giving them that degree of polish which greatly adds to the naturally martial appearance of a Tcherkassian noble. They set a still higher value upon their horses than upon their arms: a foal of the Caucasian breed is equivalent in worth to a slave. Each prince and ousden brands a mark upon his foal of the pure breed; and any peasant making the same mark upon a common horse would be liable to forfeit his life for his temerity.

The daughters of the princes are likewise brought up from home by the

ousden. They receive not the fond caresses of their mothers, to whom they are almost utter strangers. Thus, by this absurd practice, the Tcherkasses themselves destroy one of the strongest bonds of society, and stifle the voice of nature. In the houses of the ousden the princesses learn some female occupations: to work with the needle, to make straw baskets, gold and silver thread, &c. The wives of the princes have separate habitations, where they are inaccessible to strangers; their husbands themselves never visit them there except at night. A European would be thought ill-bred if he were to ask, out of civility, after the health of the wife of a Tcherkass; the latter would angrily

turn his back without deigning to reply. The family of a person of distinction in the East belongs to himself exclusively; it is, as it were, a secret, which he keeps, and concerning which no other individual has a right to inquire. This extraordinary custom tends to preserve the purity of morals, but it is not the less contrary to social happiness. The Tcherkasses would doubtless long since have laid aside their ferocity, had the softer sex possessed any influence over their manners.

The freedmen of the princes and ousden form, as we have seen, the third class among the Tcherkasses; by their manumission, they themselves become ousden, or gentlemen; but in war they

are expected to accompany their former masters, and to fight under their command. They are upstarts, who are incessantly reminded of their former condition. Travellers have not informed us, whether similar duties are required of the freedmen of these new gentry, who compose the fourth class. The serfs, or fifth class, are very numerous: they pay no fixed imposts, but furnish their ousden with absolute necessaries, in the same manner as the latter give to the princes nothing more than what is requisite for their subsistence. Part of the serfs are employed in agriculture; others are in attendance on the nobles. At the summons of the ousden, all the vassals become soldiers

or robbers, and exchange the plough for the triangular dagger, which is their ordinary weapon. They are not fond of labour; and therefore seek to gain by violence and stratagem, what they cannot acquire by industry.

Their system of agriculture is very simple. In spring they set fire to the grass in their fields; the vegetable ashes supply them with manure; they then plough the ground once, and harrow in the seed by means of trees covered with leaves. They sow the same field two or and three successive years; when they have exhausted it they go to another, when all the ground contiguous to a village has been broken up, they remove, with every thing they possess, to another

spot. What they chiefly cultivate is millet. They feed their horses with this grain, with which they also make a half-fermented beverage called *fada*, and a kind of paste, or *pasta*, which they eat instead of bread. Sometimes they put in the grain with the husk, at others without it: sometimes too they take the trouble to grind it between two blocks of wood cut into the form of millstones, or in a small hand-mill. The principal diet of the Tcherkasses consists of millet, cheese, milk, and mutton, and for seasoning, they use Turkey pepper *(capsicum)*, onions, and shalots. The common people use no salt, but steep their meat in sour milk. One of their dainties, called *chinkal*, is compo-

sed of sour milk, butter, new cheese, little balls, onions, shalots, and hard eggs. Instead of sugar they use honey, which they also mix with butter, and soak their meat in it. Honey is in general a principal article in the domestic economy of the Tcherkasses, who have in consequence a great number of hives, some peasants possessing not fewer than three hundred. They are left near the villages till the middle of summer, and are then removed into the forests on the heights; because the plants of the *steppes* are dried up by the heat, and no longer supply the bees with nutriment in the plains. The Tcherkasses make a kind of mead which they call *faous;* they also mix honey with a liquor that they ex-

tract from hemp-seed. This intoxicating beverage, which seems to have been invented in India, is termed *bang*.

The Tcherkasses never cultivate more grain than is required for their consumption, nor do they keep more cattle than they want for their own use: hence their herds in general are not numerous. They have few horned cattle, buffaloes, and goats, but a considerable number of sheep; because the flesh of the latter is their ordinary food, and with their wool the women make coarse cloth for the garments of the men. The mutton of the Caucasus is more nutritious than the flesh of our sheep; and they eat it, boiled, without salt or bread. The Tcherkassian sheep, how-

ever, are inferior to those of the Calmucks, both in regard to size and wool: in the former, the tail, which consists of fat, rarely weighs above four pounds. They have frequently four or six horns. With the milk of the ewes they make cheese, which they tie up in little bags, and smoke: cows' milk they never take till it is sour; and the cheese they make from it is bad. In summer, the sheep are driven to the mountains of the Ossetes and Dugores; and in spring and autumn, they feed in the plains and on the hills. Their sheep furnish the Tcherkasses with the means of obtaining such articles as they have not in their own country. With the Russians and Georgians they exchange sheep,

wool, and hides, for salt, linen cloth, sulphur, iron, copper utensils, cottons, and silks. The whole Kabarda abounds in game. The Tcherkasses also sell horses, which are never kept in stables, but left abroad at all seasons, not excepting the beautiful breed called *chalokh*, which belongs to the family of Tau Sultan, and consists of no more than two hundred head.

The villages of the Tcherkasses are generally composed of from forty to fifty huts, ranged in a circle. At night the domestic animals are driven into the interior of this circle, where, in case of attack, all persons incapable of bearing arms are likewise placed. In their huts, cookery, and apparel, the

utmost cleanliness prevails. They eat sitting on the ground, cross-legged, near a small table, about a foot high; but they use neither cloth, spoons, nor knives.

The Tcherkass commonly wears the Tartar costume: it consists of a shirt of white linen or red taffeta, a silk vest, with embroidered pockets for cartridges, and a kind of very short surtout; the head is covered with a round close cap. He cuts his hair very short, leaving only a lock on the crown; and he wears red boots, with very high heels. When he goes abroad, he throws a felt mantle, which he calls *dchako* over his shoulders, and a sabre and dagger are fastened to his girdle. He

never stirs out unarmed. The annexed engraving will furnish a correct idea of the costume of a prince and princess of the Tcherkasses.

Like all the inhabitants of the Caucasus, the Tcherkass makes his own gunpowder, his native mountains supplying him with abundance of saltpetre. The smiths of the country make fire-arms; the Tcherkasses also buy guns of the Turks and Georgians, and use old ones made at Venice and Genoa.

The men of the Kabarda are strong and well-proportioned; they use various expedients to give themselves a graceful shape. It is considered by them as a beauty to have broad shoul-

ders and chest, and a very small waist. They have chesnut-brown hair, an oval face, and a long thin nose.

The Circassian women have been celebrated for their personal charms; but their reputation for beauty has been attacked by several recent travellers. It appears, in the first place, that the females sold for the harems of Turkey and Persia are not Tcherkasses, who never sell their women, but belong to other tribes of the Caucasus, or the adjacent countries, and having been carried off, or even bought by the Tcherkasses, when they are again sold by the latter, they are considered as natives of their country. We are moreover assured, that beauti-

ful women are very rare among the Tcherkasses. "I have not met with any of extraordinary beauty," says Dr. Kimmel; "and officers who have long commanded in the Caucasus have informed me that Circassian beauties are extremely rare." It may perhaps be possible to reconcile these contradictory accounts. It cannot be denied that the Tcherkassian race is one of the handsomest in the world: it is certain therefore that the female sex must be distinguished by its charms; but education partly spoils what nature has bestowed. The Tcherkasses regard an extremely slender shape as the superlative degree of beauty. To produce this effect, the young females

are braced up with a strong leathern girdle; they even contrive to prevent the expansion of the bosom by means of very tight leathern stays; and to second this absurd practice, they are pinched in their food. By these means a great part of their natural beauty is effectually destroyed, and hence there are not among them many females calculated to excite the admiration of Europeans.

The Tcherkassian women of the lower classes enjoy great liberty; the wives of the serfs often appear in public without veil. Till the birth of their first child, they retain the same costume as before marriage; but after that event, they dress like other mar-

ried women, and cover the head with a white linen cloth, which they tie under the chin. Females marry between their twelfth and sixteenth year, and men before their twenty-fifth. Klaproth asserts, that a girl who has passed the age of seventeen can scarcely find a husband. The husband is not allowed to visit his wife except at night. It is in the class of serfs alone that the men continue to live with their wives when the latter begin to grow old. This custom recalls to mind the life of the Amazons, concerning whom various traditions are still current in the Caucasus. "We might conclude," says Pallas, "that the Amazons, conquered by the roving race of Tcherkassian knights,

have retained something of their ancient habits; for the Tcherkasses were undoubtedly a troop of horsemen, who by dint of arms, made for themselves a nation of vassals." Very frequently the lover carries off the object of his choice: if there be two rivals, they fight it out, or engage their friends in the quarrel, and the victorious party takes possession of the fair prize.

If the bridegroom is not satisfied of the virginity of his bride, he sends her back to her parents, and demands the restitution of the *kalim*. The unfortunate creature is then sold or put to death by her own family. A wife convicted of adultery shares the same fate; but the husband previously clips

off her hair, makes incisions in her ears, and cuts off the sleeves of her robe, and then sends her home on horseback to her parents. The partner of her guilt may expect certain death from the husband or his friends.

Tcherkasses have two kinds of divorce: the solemn and the definitive, which empowers the husband to marry again; and the provisional, which is but a private agreement of the couple to separate for a year. If, at the expiration of that time, the husband does not take back his wife, her father or relatives go to him, and compel him to yield to a solemn divorce; after which the woman is at liberty to marry again.

After the death of the husband, the wife governs the house, without dividing the property among the children. If she dies, the wife of the eldest son generally takes her place. The children sometimes demand a share of the property, in which case the eldest receives the largest, and the youngest the smallest portion. Illegitimate children have no right to any part of what is left, but yet they are maintained by the family.

The dead are interred in their clothes, in graves the sides of which are boarded. During the funeral ceremonies, the women utter loud cries of grief; and formerly the men who accompanied the procession, struck their heads violently with their fists. They wear

mourning for a year; it is black as in Europe. But if a Tcherkass has fallen in battle with the Russians, they never lament his death, because they believe that he has been immediately admitted into Paradise. It is obvious how strongly this fanatical idea must contribute to keep alive the animosity of the Tcherkasses against the Russians.

Another cause of this perpetual animosity is, the custom prevalent among these people of transmitting their hatred and revenge to their descendants. These hereditary grudges, which are common among the Arabs, are called in Tcherkassian *tli'l ouassa*, price of blood. According to this cruel custom, whole families are persecuted for

the crime of an individual. The lower classes, however, are not so implacable: among them a valuable indemnity stifles hatred, and suspends vengeance. One honourable characteristic which the Tcherkasses possess in common with the Arabs is, their great hospitality, the duties of which they perform with scrupulous minuteness and real generosity. Whoever has received hospitality from a Tcherkass, may rely upon his protection, and that of his family. If the enemies of the stranger come to take him away by force, the wife of his host gives him milk from her own breast to drink. Thenceforward he is considered as her lawful son, and the sons of his host look upon him as their

brother, defend him, and avenge his blood upon his enemies.

Among the Tcherkasses, as among all the nations of the East, age enjoys great authority. In case of disputes the oldest of the princes, ousden, and even rich peasants, assemble and give their opinions, all trying who can shout the loudest. They have no written laws. Their hereditary, and we might say national, vices, murder and robbery, are punished according to ancient custom. Whoever robs a prince is obliged to return nine times the value of the stolen articles, and to give him a slave into the bargain: thus, for one horse stolen, he must give nine horses and a man. The robbery of an

ousden is expiated by the restitution of the stolen property, and the forfeiture of twenty head of cattle.

Dancing is an amusement of the Tcherkasses of all classes. Companies of ten or twelve poor people are seen strolling about from place to place, and performing national dances. Baron Rechberg, who had an opportunity of seeing one of these troops, gives the following description of it: "Some of them played on on instrument resembling a clarionet, while others, ranged in the same line, kept time by continually clapping their hands, and crying, *A-rira, a-rira.* The dancers, placed opposite to this kind of orchestra, were little superior to the musi-

cians. Their whole art consisted in turning round on their toes, raising first one arm and then the other, stooping with their hands joined behind them, and from time to time raising shouts of joy."

The Tcherkasses are not distinguished by any religious sentiments. They were formerly Christians. Christianity had at least been introduced among them while Ivan Wasiliewitsch was sovereign of Russia. George Interiano, a Genoese, who travelled in the Kabarda towards the conclusion of the fifteenth century, says, that they had churches and Greek priests; that the young nobles attended mass on horseback outside the church; and that none of that

class entered the sacred edifice till they were sixty years old, lest, as they were constantly engaged till that period in depredations, they should profane it by their presence.

This singular religion has been gradually lost; about forty years ago the Tcherkasses had none at all; and but for the ruins of some churches, and the graves with crosses raised over them, no person would suppose that they ever had any: but since the Russians established the line of the Caucasus, the Turks, jealous of the progress of their power, have endeavoured to make proselytes among the people of the Caucasus, for the purpose of attaching them to their interest by the

bonds of religion. Musulman priests sent among the Tcherkasses have persuaded them to embrace Mahometanism: they do not indeed yet display any great zeal for their new religion, but it has made them renounce spirituous liquors, tobacco, and pork. Time will shew whether Islamism will have more power over them than Christianity possessed. They now have native priests, mostly freedmen of the princes and ousden, who have learned to read and write among the Tartars of Thabasseran, or Endery. Nothing more is necessary for the guidance of a people so ignorant, and such utter strangers to every thing like meditation.

The Tcherkassian language differs

from every other: it is very difficult for foreigners, on account of its hissing sounds, and is written with Tartar characters. There are several dialects of it; the principal dialect, or the genuine Tcherkassian idiom, is spoken in the Kabarda, and by the tribe of Beslen, resident on the banks of the Laba. Klaproth assures us, that the Tcherkasses have no written books in their language. The arts and literature are despised by so warlike a nation; yet it is surprising that the princes and gentlemen should not sometimes have recourse to reading in their leisure moments.

Besides the ordinary language, the Tcherkasses have two others, which

they use in excursions, and keep secret. One of these is called the *chakobché*, and the other the *farchipsé*. The first is a totally distinct language; the latter differs in no respect from the vulgar tongue, but in the addition of certain syllables to every word. The proper names of the Tcherkasses are almost all compound substantive nouns. Some of them are very curious; for instance, *Keltchouqua*, son of wool; *Meiramaqua*, son of Friday; *Khammursa*, prince of dogs; *Hadiaqua*, little dog without tail. Many of the nobles speak the Tartar language, which is diffused not only over the Caucasus, but through the whole of Western Asia.

A few years since the plague, brought to Caucasus by some priests on their return from Mecca, made great ravages in the Kabarda, and considerably diminished the population. The mischievous dogma of fatalism, which, as it is well known, constitutes part of the Mahometan doctrine, and their ignorance, prevent the Tcherkasses from taking measures to check this scourge. "Fortunately," says Dr. Kimmel, "the plague is propagated in the Caucasus, not by the air, but by contact with the infected person, or articles which have belonged to him." Perhaps the quietness of the Tcherkasses may be owing to this dreadful calamity. Though vassals of the Russian empire for sixty years past,

they have never yet ceased to make incursions into the Russian territories, carrying off men and cattle. To no purpose does the government keep in this country a Kabardinski Pristaw, or inspector of Kabardians, and piquets of Cossacks; the Tcherkasses have the hardihood to plunder even the environs of the inspector's residence. Klaproth is of opinion, that the mild system pursued by Russia in regard to these people is the very thing that emboldens them to continue their depredations. When a Tcherkassian robber is taken, he is in general only imprisoned for a few days, and then set at liberty on the solicitation of some Kabardian prince. The traveller just quoted thinks that it

would be judicious to renew the examples of severity which kept the Tcherkasses in obedience when Count Markow commanded on the line of the Caucasus. That general withheld the pensions of the Tcherkassian princes; and thus made them responsible for the outrages that were committed. The latter, at first, sought to revenge themselves by fresh depredations: but seeing that some of their number, if they could be caught, were scourged like the meanest criminals, they soon ceased to indulge in such excesses. Markow's severity produced a much better effect than the courteous behaviour of Potemkin, who vainly hoped to conciliate the Tcherkassian princes by distributing

titles and presents among them: conceiving that they were feared, these titled and rewarded princes nevertheless continued to pursue the profession of freebooters. A traveller is not safe near the Terek; he is obliged to join a strong convoy, or he runs the risk of being plundered and carried off. It is frequently the case even that the Tcherkassian hordes carry their audacity to such a pitch, as to penetrate very far into the Russian governments. In this manner they revenge themselves in detail on the nation which has cooped them up in the Caucasus, and deprived them of two-thirds of their former territory; but it is to be lamented, that innocent travellers should

often fall a sacrifice to this vindictive spirit.

It is worthy of remark, that a Tcherkassian dynasty once reigned in Egypt; namely, that of the Bordshites, founded by a Tcherkassian, who, after having been a slave, was admitted among the Mamelukes, gained over a party at Cairo, deposed the reigning sultan, and ascended the throne in 1372.

A few years since two Tcherkassian princes resided for some months at St. Petersburg. The inhabitants of that capital, though accustomed to the sight of persons of all nations, could not cease to admire these strangers. Their dress was in fact so brilliant as to eclipse that of all other princes.

They wore a kind of robe of a white India stuff, and a shorter robe of a brown stuff. These two garments were fastened round the waist by a girdle covered with ornaments in mat and burnished gold; the sleeves were open to the elbow; the neck was bare, and on their heads they wore a cap composed of stripes of cloth, which grew smaller to the top. They had yellow boots, terminating in very long peaks. Their tawny complexion and black hair formed a striking contrast with this dress; but it was their armour that chiefly excited the curiosity of the good people of Petersburg. Never was there seen a more beautiful piece of workmanship than the coats of

mail of these Caucasians: they were composed of rings of steel, equally delicate and brilliant, and joined together with exquisite art. Their lustre was heightened by a gold-hilted dagger, a small damaskeened sabre richly ornamented, and a pair of pistols covered with figures in gold. In a morocco case below the left arm they carried a bow; and another case, likewise made of morocco and enriched with gold, contained their arrows, four feet long, and pointed with steel. Admiring nothing but themselves, at least not manifesting surprise at any thing, these strangers nevertheless took delight in exhibiting themselves to the gaze of the multitude. It is related, that at first all

their wants were supplied from the kitchen of the imperial palace, and that they expressed a wish to receive the oxen, calves, poultry, and other animals alive, in order that they might kill and dress in their own way, agreeably to the custom of their country.

The annexed engraving, erroneously inscribed *Tartar of the Cuban*, represents a Tcherkassian prince of the Little Kabarda, accoutred for war. His upper robe does not entirely conceal the armour described above, which is seen on each arm; his cap is of precisely the same fashion as that of the two princes just mentioned; his bow-case is slung on his left side; and under his left arm he holds the quiver for arrows.

TARTAR of the CUBAN.

Pub.d by R. Ackermann London [illegible].

It may not be amiss, however, to remark, that there are several tribes of Tcherkasses residing near the Kuban, who are comprehended by the Russians under the general appellation of *Sakoubanzi*, or Transkubanians. The principal of these are the Abasech, the Temirgoi and the Chapsik; but as the manners of these tribes nearly resemble those of the great body of the nation described in the preceding pages, any particular notice of them would be superfluous.

CHAP. XI.

THE GEORGIANS.

Georgia, separated from Circassia, or the country of the Tcherkasses, by one of the principal chains of the Caucasus, was an independent kingdom, till, in 1783, the last sovereign, Heraclius, to prevent the conquest of the country by the Persians, submitted himself and his dominions to the Russian sceptre. In 1801 it was incorporated with the empire as a distinct government by the name of Grusia.

The Georgians are as handsome a race of people as their neighbours the

Tcherkasses, and equally addicted to pillage with all the other nations of the Caucasus. They profess the Greek religion and have a patriarch, who resides at Tiflis, the capital of Georgia, and about three thousand churches, many of which however lie in ruins in consequence of the hostilities of the Turks and Persians, who have long contested the possession of the country.

The feudal system still prevails in Georgia: the peasants are the serfs of the princes and nobles, who have a right to sell or otherwise dispose of them. In the province of Imiretti the princes are not accountable to any one for what they do to their vassals. That province is better cultivated than

Mingrelia, the inhabitants of which are a martial people but miserably poor. They have rendered themselves formidable to their neighbours by their incursions, in which they carry off both men and women and sell them for slaves to the Turks. The traffic in slaves is very considerable in Georgia, but it has been decreasing for some time, and it is to be hoped that the Russian government will succeed in suppressing it entirely.

It was formerly no uncommon thing for fathers to sell their own children, brothers their sisters, and nobles their vassals; and many ship-loads of slaves were annually carried out of the country to Turkey. When however it is considered that, as we are assured by a

Pl. 11

WOMAN of GEORGIA.

Pub.d by R. Ackermann London 182[illegible]

foreign writer, a young, handsome, red-haired girl will sell for six or seven thousand Turkish piastres, it must be evident that females thus disposed of are likely to fall into better hands and to experience kinder treatment than they would have found in their own country. The beauty of the Georgian women is well known; but they are said to be lewd, treacherous and inattentive to cleanliness, qualities which operate as a great draw-back on their charms. It is said, that the frequent sojournment of foreigners in Georgia has greatly contributed to corrupt the mánners of the sex. They dress with elegance, as may be seen by the representation of their costume in the opposite plate.

The favourite occupations of the Georgian princes and nobles are war and hunting. They are almost always on horseback and are strangers to every other mode of travelling. They have indeed a rude vehicle called *arba*, common throughout all the countries of the Caucasus, but it is used only for the conveyance of commodities of different kinds.

In time of war the Georgians are all soldiers: the vassals repair to the standards of the nobles, who with them join their prince. Their arms consist of pistols, sabre, carbine, and dagger, and they always carry with them a cup to drink out of. The nobles have likewise coats of mail, and gold and silver chains.

Almost all the Georgians wear a red silk shirt, pantaloons of cloth or silk, and morocco leather slippers; and they rarely go abroad unarmed.

The serfs possess nothing of their own: besides, the Georgian is too thoughtless to save any part of the produce of his labour. He cultivates no more than he is in the habit of consuming. Instead of bread he contents himself with a thick soup made of millet and pork, and this is his only fare: from oats he obtains by distillation, a wretched spirit. Notwithstanding this apparent moderation, he is a glutton when opportunity offords him the means of indulgence.

Upon the whole, travellers agree in

painting these people in the blackest colours. Arrogant in prosperity, the Georgian is servile and cringing to his superiors, and the sworn enemy of all those of whom he stands in awe. He is cruel to his foes, and implacable in his revenge, indolent at home, active and crafty in predatory enterprizes, false and ungrateful in the ordinary transactions of life. These bad qualities are no doubt compensated by some virtues: but travellers have been too much struck by the unfavourable side of the character of the Georgians to pay attention to the other.

END OF VOL. III.

GREEN, LEICESTER STREET, LEICESTER SQUARE.

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